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THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

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THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.



[*The Ellesmere woodcuts are to be put opposite the beginnings of the Tales (not Prologues) they respectively belong to, as shown by the italic notices there of the paintings in the MS. A set of the cuts coloured is now issued, Oct. 1880, besides the plain set sent out in 1868-1871.*]

THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



LONDON:
PUBLISHT FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY
BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

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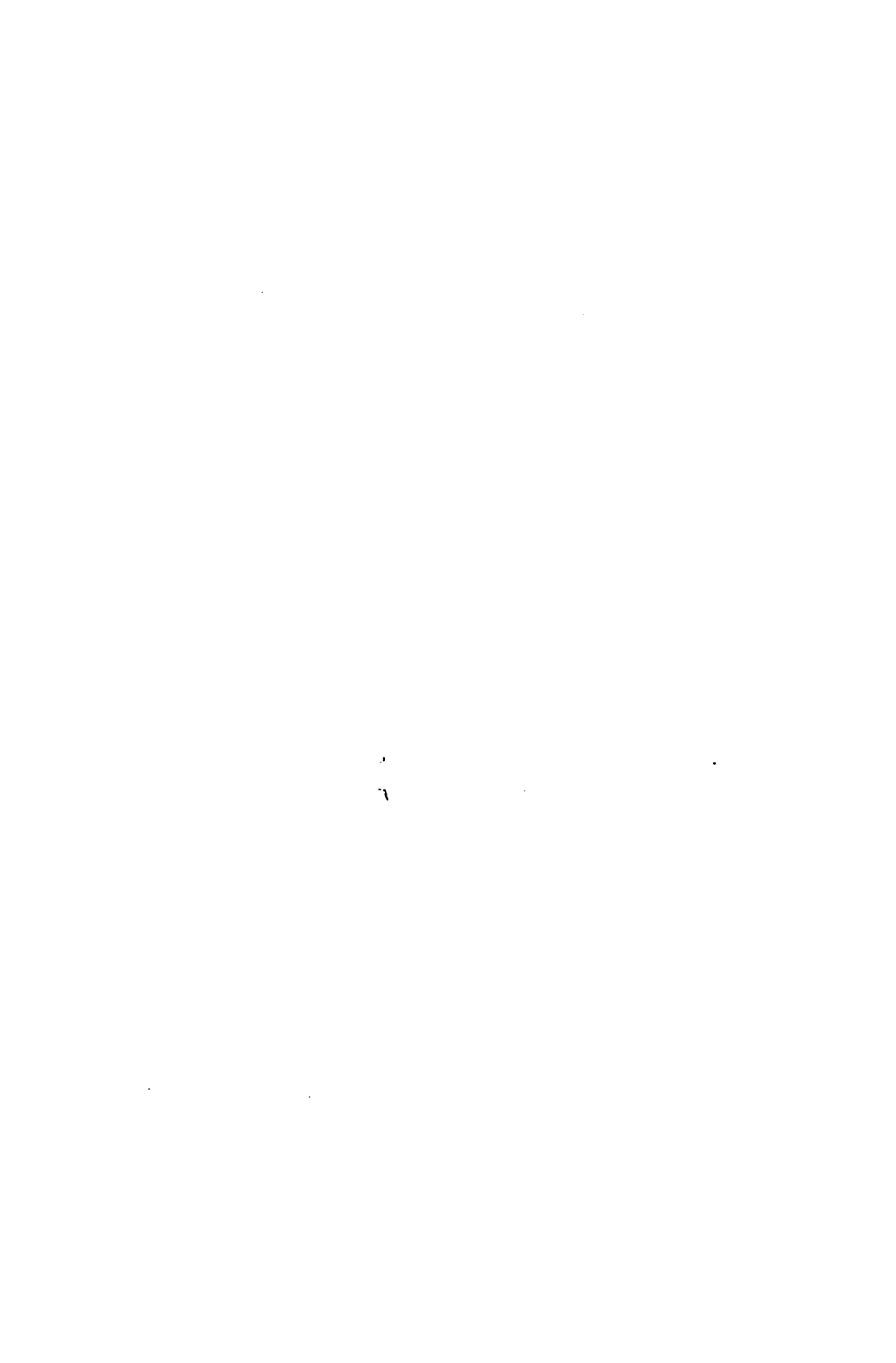
TO THE

Earl of Ellesmere,

BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE

THIS ELLESMERE MS IS PRINTED.

Christmas, 1908.



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CORRECTIONS FOR THE SIX-TEXT AND SEPARATE PRINTS
OF THE
ELLESMERE MS.

BY PROF. DR. EWALD FLÜGEL.

By the kindness of Lord Ellesmere and his Librarian, Mr. Strachan Holme, Prof. Flügel was able last May to collate with the MS. the whole of Dr. Furnivall's print of it for the Chaucer Society, and has sent the following list of Corrections, for which we are all greatly indebted to him.—F. J. F.

June 4, 1907.

Here bygynneþ &c.] *no heading in the Ellesmere MS.*

- A.** 92, *for in read is*
360, *for such read swich*
408, *for from read fro*
550, *for nas read was*
612, *for yet read and yet*
749, *for And read He*
(812 wolde)
859. *heading: Scithice . . . prelia*
865, *for That read What*
1252, *for Of read On*
1347, *for NOW read YOW*
1431, *his] omit.*
1454, *for soor read soor and*
1739, *for Therefore read Wherefore*
2058, *for to read til*
2488, *for But read And*
2493, *the] omit.*
2509, *for foyte read foote*
2920, *for And read Ne*
3862, *for in read is in*
4163, *for snorteth read fnorteth*
B. 644, *for or read for*
790, *for snoreth read fnorteth*
D. 157, *for whil that read whil*
253, *for if that read if*

- 660, *for awe read lawe*
1322, *for was read nas*
E. 569, *for And read But*
1582, *for And read As*
1804, *for tyme read tyme*
F. 234, *for prospetiues read perspectives*
C. 86, *for wolde read wole*
1222, *for it read it is*
1683, *for the read this*
2041, *for sette read fette*
2444, *for han read ne han*
2912, *for or read or of*
4339, *tale] omit.*
G. 91, *for favour read sauour*
772, *for Of read And of*
1122, *for In the read In*
1470, *for Man read Men*
H. 10, *for As read That*
240, *for they read that*
328, *for men read man*
I. 3, *for ne nas read nas*
170, *for noot read moot*
335, *hynymeth*
474, *for commendacioñ read commendacioñ eek*
786, *for have read han*
923, *for no men read mo men*

RULES OF THE
COUNCIL.

THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART I.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
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Christians, 1908.

GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

ELLESMERE MS.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

W Han that Aprille, with hise shoures soote, ^[leaf 5]
 The droghte of March / hath perced to the roote,
 And bathed euery veyne / in swich licour
 Of which vertu / engendred is the flour; 4
 Whan Zephirus eek / with his swete breeth
 Inspired hath / in euery holt and heeth,
 The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne
 Hath in the Ram / his half[e] cours yronne, ¶ 1. sol in Ariete
 And smale foweles / maken melodye
 That slepen al the nyght / with open eye:
 So priketh hem nature in hir corages
 Thanne longen folk / to goon on pilgrimages, 12
 And Palmeres / for to seken straunge strondes
 To ferne halwes / kowthe in sondry londes,
 And specially / from euery shires ende
 Of Engelond / to Caunturbury they wende, 16
 The hooly blisful martir for to seke
 That hem hath holpen / whan þat they were seeke,
Bifil that / in that seson on a day
 In Southwerk / at the Tabard as I lay 20
 Redy / to wenden on my pilgrymage
 To Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage
 At nyght / were come / in to that hostelrye
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye 24
 Of sondry folk / by aventure y-falle
 In felaweshipe / and pilgrimes were they alle
 That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde

2 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

The chambres and the stables weren wyde 28
 And wel we weren esed atte beste
 And shortly / whan the sonne was to reste
 So hadde I spoken / with hem everychon
 That I was / of hir felaweshipe anon 32
 And made forward / erly for to ryse
 To take oure wey / ther as I yow deuyse
But natheles / whil I haue tyme *and* space
 Er that I ferther / in this tale pace 36
 Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
 To telle yow / al the condicioñ
 Of ech of hem / so as it semed me
 And whiche they were / and of what degree 40
 And eek in what array / that they were Inne
 And at a knyght / than wol I first bigynne
A knyght ther was / and that a worthy man ¶ Knyght
 That fro the tyme / that he first bigan 44
 To riden out / he loued chivalrie
 Trouthe and honour / fredom and curteisie
 fful worthy was he / in his lordes werre
 And therto / hadde he riden / no man ferre 48
 As wel in cristendom / as in Hethenesse [leaf 5, back]
 And euere / honoured for his worthynesse
 ¶ At Alisaundre he was / whan it was wonne
 fful ofte tyme / he hadde the bord bigonne 52
 Abouen alle nacions in Pruce
 In Lettow / hadde he reysed and in Ruce
 No cristen man so ofte of his degree
 In Gernade / at the seege eek hadde he be. 56
 Of Algezir / and riden in Belmarye
 At Lyeyes was he / and at Satalye
 Whan they were wonne / *and* in the grete See
 At many a noble Armee / hadde he be 60
 At mortal batailles / hadde he been fiftene
 And foughten for oure feith at Tramysse
 In lystes thries / and ay slayn his foo

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 3

This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also 64
 Somtyme / with the lord of Palatye
 Agayn / another hethen in Turkye
 And eueremoore / he hadde a souereyn prys
 And though þat he were worthy he was wys 68
 And of his port / as meeke as is a mayde
 He neuere yet / no vileynye ne sayde
 In al his lyf / vn to no maner wight
 He was a verray parfit gentil knyght 72
 ¶ But for to tellen yow / of his array
 His hors weren goode / but he was nat gay
 Of fustian / he wered a gypon
 Al bismotered with his habergeon 76
 ffor he was late / ycome from his viage
 And wente / for to doon his pilgrimage
 With hym ther was his sone a yong^r Squier ¶ Squier 80
 A louyere / and a lusty Bachelor
 With lokkes crulle / as they were leyd in presse
 Of twenty yeer of Age / he was I gesse
 Of his stature / he was of euene lengthe
 And wonderly delyuere / and of greet strengthe 84
 And he hadde been somtyme in chyuachie
 In fflaundres / in Artoys and Pycardie
 And born hym weel / as of so litel space
 In hope / to stonden in his lady grace 88
 Embrouded was he / as it were a meede
 Al ful of fresshe floures / whyte and reede
 Syngynge he was / or floytynge al the day
 He was as fressh / as in the Monthe of May 92
 Short was his gowne / with sleues longe and wyde
 Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde
 He koude songes make / and wel endite
 Iuste and eek daunce / and weel purtreye and write 96
 So hoot he louede / that by nyghtertale (leaf 6)
 He slepte namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale
 Curteis he was / lowely / and scruiysable

4 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

And carf / biforn his fader at the table 100
A Yeman hadde he / and seruantz namo ¶ Yeman
 At that tyme / for hym liste ride soo
 And he was clad / in cote *and* hood of grene
 A sheef of pecok arwes / bright and kene 104
 Vnder his belt he bar ful thriftily
 Wel koude he / dresse his takel yemanly
 Hise arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe
 And in his hand / he baar a myghty bowe 108
 A not heed hadde he / with a broun visage
 Of woodecraft / wel koude he al the vsage
 Vp on his arm / he baar a gay bracer
 And by his syde / a swerd / and a bokeler / 112
 And on that oother syde / a gay daggere
 Harneised wel / and sharpe as point of spere
 A Cristophere on his brest of siluer sheene
 An horn he bar / the bawdryk was of grene 116
 A florster was he / soothly as I gesse
Ther was also / a Nonne a PRIORESSE ¶ Prioressse
 That of hir smylyng / was ful symple *and* coy
 Hire gretteste ooth / was but by seint Loy 120
 And she was cleped / madame Eglentyne
 fful weel she soong the seruice dyuyne,
 Entuned in hir nose / ful semeely
 And frenssh / she spak / ful faire and fetisly 124
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 ffor frenssh of Parys / was to hire vnknowe
 At mete / wel ytaught was she with alle
 She leet no morsel / from hir lippes falle 128
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 Wel koude she carie a morsel / and wel kepe
 That no drope / ne fille vp on hire brist
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 That in hir coppe / ther was no ferthyng sene
 Of grece / whan she dronken hadde hir draughte

fful semely / after hir mete she raughte 136
 And sikerly / she was of greet desport
 And ful plesaunt / and amyable of port
 And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
 Of Court and to been estatlich of manere 140
 And to ben holden digne of reuerence
 But for to speken of hire conscience
 She was so charitable and so pitous
 She wolde wepe / if that she saugh a Mous 144
 Kaught in a trappe / if it were deed or bledde (leaf 6, back)
 Of smale houndes / hadde she þat she fedde
 With rosted flessch / or Milk / and wastel breed
 But soore wepte she / if any of hem were deed 148
 Or if men smoot it / with a yerde smerte
 And al was conscience and tendre herte
 fful semyly / hir wympul pynched was
 Hire nose tretys / hir eyen greye as glas 152
 Hir mouth ful smal / and ther to softe *and* reed
 But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed
 It was almoost . a spanne brood I trowe
 For hardily / she was nat vndergrowe 156
 fful fetys was hir cloke / as I was war
 Of smal coral / aboute hire Arm she bar
 A peire of bedes / gauded al with grene
 And ther on / heng^t a brooch of gold ful sheene 160
 On which / ther was first write a crowned .A.
 And after / Amor vincit omnia.
 Another Nonne / with hire hadde she ¶ Nonne & ih.
preestes.
 That was hire Chapeleyne and preestes thre 164
 A Monk ther was / a fair for the maistrie ¶ Monk
 An outridere / that louede venerie
 A manly man / to been an Abbot able
 fful many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable 168
 And whan he rood / men myghte his brydel heere
 Gynglen / in a whistlynge wynd als cleere
 And eek^t as loude / as dooth þe Chapel belle

6 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Ther as this lord / was kepere of the Celle 172
 The reule of saint Maure / or of saint Beneit /
 By cause that it was old / and som del streit /
 This ilke Monk / leet olde thynges pace
 And heeld / after the newe world the space 176
 He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen
 That seith / that hunters beth nat hooly men
 Ne that a Monk / whan he is recchelees
 Is likned / til a fissh / þat is waterlees 180
 This is to seyn / a Monk out of his Cloystre
 But thilke text / heeld he nat worth an Oystre
 And I seyde / his opinion was good
 What sholde he studie / and make hym seluen wood 184
 Vpon a book / in Cloystre alwey to poure
 Or swynken with his handes, and labour
 As Austyn bit / how shal the world be serued
 Lat Austyn / haue his owene swynk / to him reserued 188
 Therefore / he was a prikasour aright
 Grehoundes he hadde / as swift as fowel in flight
 Of prikyng and of huntynge for the hare
 Was al his lust. for no cost wolde he spare 192
 I seigh his sleues / ypurfiled at the hond [leaf 7]
 With grys / and that the fyneste of a lond
 And for to festne his hood vnder his chyn
 He hadde of gold / ywroght / a ful curious pyn 196
 A loue knotte / in the gretter ende ther was
 His heed was balled / þat shoon as any glas
 And eek his face / as it hadde been enoynt/
 He was a lord ful fat / and in good poynt 200
 Hise eyen stepe / and rollynge in his heed
 That stemed / as a forneys of a leed
 His bootes souple / his hors in greet estaat
 Now certainly / he was a fair prelaat 204
 He was nat pale / as a forpyned goost
 A fat swan loued he best of any roost
 His palfrey / was as broun as is a berye

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 7

A	ffrere ther was / a wantowne and a merye,	¶ ffrere
	A lymytour / a ful solempne man	209
	In alle the ordres foure / is noon þat kan	
	So muchel of daliaunce / and fair langage	
	He hadde maad / ful many a mariage	212
	Of yonge women / at his owene cost	
	Vn to his ordre / he was a noble post	
	And wel biloued / and famulier was he	
	With frankeleyns / ouer al in his contree	216
	And [eek] with worthy women of the toun	
	ffor he hadde power of confessioun	
	As seyde hym self / moore than a Curat	
	ffor of his ordre / he was licepciāt	220
	fful swetely / herde he confessiō	
	And plesaunt was his absoluciō	
	He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce	
	Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce	224
	ffor vnto a poure ordre / for to yiue	
	Is signe / þat a man is wel yshryue	
	ffor if he yaf / he dorste make avaunt	
	He wiste / that a man was repentaunt	228
	ffor many a man / so harde is of his herte	
	He may nat wepe / al thogh hym soore smerte	
	Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyer	
	Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres	232
	His typet was ay farsed ful of knyues	
	And pynnes / for to yeuen yonge wyues	
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	Of yeddynges / he baar outrely the pris	
	His nekke / whit was / as the flour delys	
	Ther to / he strong was as a Champion	
	He knew the Tauernes wel in al the toun	240
	And euerich Hostiler / and Tappestere	[leaf 7, back]
	Bet than a lazar / or a beggestere	
	ffor vn to swich a worthy man as he	

8 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Acorded nat / as by his facultee	244
To haue with sike lazars Aqueyntaunce	
It is nat honeste / it may nat avaunce	
ffor to deelen / with no swich poraille	
But al <i>with</i> riche / and sellares of vitaille	248
And ouer al / ther as profit sholde arise	
Curteis he was / and lowely of seruyse	
Ther nas no man / nowher so vertuous	
He was / the beste beggere in his hous	252
[.	
. <i>no gap in the MS.</i>]	
ffor though a wydwe / hadde noght a sho	
So plesaunt / was his In principio	
Yet wolde he haue / a ferthyng ^r er he wente	
His purchas / was wel bettre than his rente	256
And rage he koude / as it were right a whelp ^e	
In loue dayes / ther koude he muchel helpe	
ffor there he was nat lyk a Cloyster	
With a thredbare cope / as is a poure scol ^r	260
But he was lyk / a maister / or a pope	
Of double worstede / was his semycope	
That rounded as a belle / out of the presse	
Somwhat he lipped / for his wantownesse	264
To make his englissh / sweete vp on his tonge	
And in his harpyng ^r . whan þat he hadde songe	
Hise eyen twynkled in his heed aryght ^r	
As doon the sterres / in the frosty nyght ^r	268
This worthy lymytour / was cleped Huberd ^r	
A Marchant was ther <i>with</i> a forked berd ^r	¶ Marchant
In Motlee and hye on horse he sat ^r	
Vp on his heed a fflaundryssh Beuere hat /	272
His bootes clasped / faire and fetisly	
Hise rescns he spak / ful solempnely	
Sownynge alway thencrees of his wynnyng ^r	
He wolde the see were kept ^r for any thing ^r .	276
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle	

Wel koude hē in eschaunge sheeldes selle
 This worthy man / ful wel his wit bisette
 Ther wiste no wight̄ þat he was in dette 280
 So estatly / was he of his gouernaunce
 With his bargaynes / and with his cheuyssaunce
 ffor sothe / he was a worthy man with alle[†]
 But sooth to seyn / I noot how men hym calle 284
A Clerk ther was / of Oxenford̄ also ¶ Clerk of Oxenford̄,
 That vn to logyk̄ / hadde longe ygo
 And leene was his hors as is a rake
 And hē nas nat right fat, I vndertake 288
 But looked holwe / and ther to sobrelly
 fful thredbare / was his ouereste courtepy
 ffor he hadde geten hym yet no benefice
 Ne was so worldly / for to haue office 292
 ffor hym was leuere / haue at his beddes heed
 Twenty bookes / clad in blak̄ or reed
 Of Aristotle / and his Philosophie
 Than robes riche / or fithele / or gay sautrie 296
 But al be / that he was a Philosophre
 Yet hadde he / but litel gold in cofre
 But al þat he myghte / of his freendes hente
 On bookes / and his lernynge he it spentē 300
 And bisily / gan for the soules preye
 Of hem / þat yaf hym wher with to scoleye
 Of studie took he moost cure *and* moost heede
 Noght o word / spak he moore than was neede 304
 And that was seyde / in forme and reuerence
 And short̄ and quyk̄ and ful of hy sentence
 Sowynge in moral vertu / was his speche
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche 308
A Sergeant of the Lawe / war and wys ¶ Sergeant of lawe
 That often hadde been at the Parvys
 Ther was also / ful riche of excellence
 Discreet he was / and of greet reuerence 312
 He semed swich / hise wordes weren so wise

10 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Iustice he was / ful often in Assise,
 By patente / and by pleyn commissioun
 ffor his science / and for his heigh renoun 316
 Of fees and robes / hadde he many oon
 So greet a purchasour / was nowher noon
 Al was fee symple to hym in effect
 His purchasyng / myghte nat been infect 320
 Nowher / so bisy a man as he ther nas
 And yet he semed / bisier than he was
 In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle
 That from the tyme / of kyng william were yfalle 324
 Ther-to / he koude endite and make a thyng
 Ther koude no wight / pynchen at his writyng
 And euery statut / koude he pleyn by rote
 He rood but hoomly / in a medlee cote 328
 Girt with a ceint of silk / with barres smale
 Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

A ffrankeleyn / was in his compaignye .¶ ffrankeleyn
 Whit was his heed / as is a dayesye 332

Of his complexioñ / he was sangwyn
 Wel loued he by the morwe a sope in wyn
 To lyuen in delit was euere his wone
 For he was / Epicurus owene sone 336
 That heeld opinioñ that pleyn delit [leaf 8, back]
 Was verray felicitee parfit

An housholders / and that a greet was he
 Seint Iulian was he in his contree 340

His breed / his Ale / was always after oon
 A bettre envyned man / was neuere noon
 With oute bake mete / was neuere his hous
 Of fish and flessch / and that so plenteuous 344

It snwed in his hous / of mete and drynke
 Of alle deyntees / that men koude thynke
 After the sondry sesons / of the yeer
 So chaunged he / his mete and his soper 348
 ful many a fat partrich / hadde he in Muwe

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 11

And many a Broom / and many a luce in Stuwē
 Wo was his Cook / but if his sauce were
 Poynaunt / and sharpe / and redy al his geere 352
 His table dormant in his halle alway
 Stood redy couered / al the longe day
 At sessions ther was he lord and sire
 fful ofte tyme / he was knyght of the shire 356
 An Anlaas / and a gipser al of silk
 Heeng at his girdel / whit as morne Milk /
 A shirreue hadde he been and Countour
 Was nowher / such a worthy Vauasour 360
 A n haberdasshere and a Carpenter ¶ Haberdasshere
 A Webbe / a Dyere / and a Tapyer ¶ Carpenter
 And they were clothed alle in o lyuere ¶ Webbe
 Of a solempne / and a greet fraternitee ¶ Dyere
 fful fressh and newe / hir geere apiked was ¶ Tapicer 364
 Hir knyues / were chaped noght with bras
 But al with siluer / wrought ful clene and weel
 Hire girdles and hir pouches euerydeel 368
 Wel semed ech of hem / a fair burgeys
 To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a deys
 Euerich / for the wisdom pat he kan
 Was shaply / for to been an Alderman 372
 ffor catel hadde they ynogh and rente
 And eek hir wyues wolde it wel assente
 And elles certeyn / were they to blame
 It is ful fair / to been ycleped ma Dame 376
 And goon to vigilies / al bifore
 And haue a Mantel roialliche ybore
 A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones ¶ Cook.
 To boille the chiknes with the Marybones 380
 And poudre Marchant tart and galyngale
 Wel koude he knowe / a draughte of London ale
 He koude rooste and sethe / and boille and frye
 Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye 384
 But greet harm was it / as it thoughte me [leaf 9]

12 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

That on his shyne / a mormal hadde he
 ffor blankmanger / that made he with the beste
A Shipman was ther / wonynge fer by weste ¶ Shipman
 ffor aught I woot / he was of Dertemouthe 389
 He rood vp on a Rouncey / as he kouthe
 In a gowne of faldyng^t to the knee
A daggere / hangynge on a laas hadde he 392
 Aboute his nekke / vnder his Arm adoun
 The hote somer / hadde maad his hewe al broun
 And certainly / he was a good felawe
 fful many a draughte of wyn / had he [y-]drawe 396
 ffro Burdeuxward^t / whil that the Chapman sleepe
 Of nyce conscience / took he no keepe
 If þat he faught^t and hadde the hyer hond^t
 By water / he sente hem hoom to euery lond^t 400
 But of his craft / to rekene wel his tydes
 His stremes / and his daungers hym bisides
 His herberwe / and his moone / his lodemenage
 Ther nas noon swich / from Hulle to Cartage 404
 Hardy he was and wys / to vndertake
 With many a tempest / hadde his berd been shake
 He knew alle the hauenes / as they were
 ffrom Gootlond^t to the Cape of ffynystere 408
 And euery cryke / in Britaigne and in Spayne
 His Barge / ycleped was the Maudelayne
With vs ther was a Doctour of Phisik ¶ Doctour of Phisik/
 In al this world / ne was ther noon hym lik 412
 To speke of phisik / and of Surgerye
 ffor he was grounded in Astronome
 He kepte his pacient^t a ful greet deel
 In houres / by his magyk natureel 416
 Wel koude he fortunen the Ascendent
 Of hise ymages / for his pacient^t
 He knew the cause / of euerich maladye
 Were it of hoot or cold / or moyste / or drye 420
 And where they engendred / and of what humour

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 13

He was a verray parfit praktisour
 The cause yknowe / and of his harm the roote
 Anon he yaf / the sike man his boote 424
 fful redy hadde he / hise Apothecaries
 To sende him drogges and his letuaries
 ffor ech of hem / made oother for to wynne
 Hir frendshipe / nas nat newe to bigynne 428
 Wel knew he / the olde Esculapius
 And Deyscorides / and eek Risus
 Olde ypocras / Haly / and Galyen
 Serapion Razis / and Auycen 432
 Auerrois / Damascien / and Constantyn [leaf 9, back]
 Bernard / and Gatesden / and Gilbertyn
 Of his diete / mesurable was he
 ffor it was / of no superfluitee 436
 But of greet norissyng / and digestible
 His studie / was but litel on the Bible
 In sangwyn and in pers / he clad was al
 Lynced with Taffata / and with Sendal 440
 And yet he was / but esy of dispence
 He kepte / that he wan in pestilence
 ffor gold in Phisik / is a cordial
 Therefore he louede gold in special 444
 A good wif was ther of biside Bathe ¶ The goode Wif of
 ¶ Bathe
 But she was som del deaf and þat was scathe
 Of clooth makynge she hadde swich an haunt
 She passed hem of ypres and of Gaunt 448
 In al the parisshe / wif ne was ther noon
 That to the offrynge / bifore hire sholde goon
 And if ther dide / certeyn so wrooth was she
 That she was / out of alle charitee 452
 Hir couerchiefs / ful fyne weren of ground
 I dorste swere / they weyeden ten pound
 That on a sonday / weren vpon hir heed
 Hir hosen weren / of fyn scarlet reed 456
 fful streite yteyd / and shoes ful moyste and newe

14 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. **Ellesmere MS.**

Boold was hir face / and fair and reed of hewe
 She was a worthy womman al hir lyue
 Housbondes at chirche dore / she hadde fyue 460
 Withouten oother compaignye in youthe
 But ther of / nedeth nat to speke as nowthe
 And thries / hadde she been at Ierusalem
 She hadde passed / many a straunge strem 464
 At Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne
 In Galice at Seint Iame / and at Coloigne
 She koude muchel / of wandrynge by the weye
 Gat tothed was she / soothly for to seye 468
 Vp on an Amblere / eaily she sat
 Ywympled wel / and on hir heed an hat
 As brood / as is a bokeler / or a targe
 A foot mantel / aboute hir hipes large 472
 And on hire feet a paire of spores sharpe
 In felaweshipe / wel koude she laughe *and* carpe
 Of remedies of loue / she knew *per* chaunce
 For she koude of that Art the olde daunce 476
 A good man was ther of Religioun
 And was / a poure Person of a toun ¶ Person of a toun.
 But riche he was / of hooly thoght *and* werk/
 He was also / a lerned man a clerk 480
 That cristes gospel / trewely wolde preche [leaf 10]
 Hise parissheens / deuoutly wolde he teche
 Benygne he was / and wonder diligent
 And in Aduersitee ful pacient 484
 And swich / he was [y-]preued ofte sithes
 ful looth were hym / to cursen for hise tithes
 But rather wolde he yeuen out of doute
 Vn to his poure parissheens aboute 488
 Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce
 He koude / in litel thyng haue suffisaunce
 Wyd was his parisshe / and houses fer a sonder
 But he ne lafte nat for reyn ne thonder 492
 In siknesse nor in meschief / to visite

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. *Ellesmere MS.* 15

The ferreste in his parisshe muche and lite
 Vp on his feet and in his hand a staf
 This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf 496
 That firste he wroghte / and afterward that he taughte
 Out of the gospel / he tho wordes caughte
 And this figure / he added eek ther to
 That if gold ruste / what shal Iren doo 500
 For if a preest be foul / on whom we truste
 No wonder is / a lewed man to ruste
 And shame it is / if [that] a prest take keepe
 A shiten shepherde / and a clene sheepe 504
 Wel oghte a preest / ensample for to yeue
 By his clenness / how þat his sheepe sholde lyue
 He sette nat his benefice to hyre
 And leet his sheepe / encombred in the Myre 508
 And ran to London / vn to seint Poules
 To seken hym a chauntrie for soules
 Or with a bretherhed / to been withholde
 But dwelleth at hoom and kepeth wel his folde 512
 So that the wolf / ne made it nat myscarie
 He was a shepherde / and noght a Mercenarie
 And though he hooly were / and vertuous
 He was nat to synful man despitous 516
 Ne of his speche / daungerous ne digne
 But in his techyng discreet and benygne
 To drawen folk to heuene by fairnesse
 By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520
 But it were any persone obstinat
 What so he were / of heigh or lough estat
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys
 A better preest I trowe / þat nowher noon ys 524
 He waiteth / after no pompe and reuerence
 Ne maked him a spiced conscience
 But cristes loore / and hise Apostles twelue
 He taughte / but first he folwed it hym selue 528

With hym ther was a Plowman was his brother ^[leaf 10, back]
 ¶ Plowman.

16 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

That hadde ylad of dong' ful many a fother
A trewe swynkere / and a good was he
Lyuyng in pees / and parfit charitee 532
God loued he best / with al his hoole herte
At alle tymes / thogh he gamed or smerte
And thanne his neighebore / right as hym selue
He wolde thresshe / and ther to dyke and delue 536
For cristes sake / for euery poure wight
Withouten hire / if it lay in his myght
Hise tithes / payde he ful faire and wel
Bothe of his propre swynk' and his catel 540
In a Tabard he rood / vpon a Mere
Ther was also / a Reue and a Millere ¶ Millere.
A Somnour / and a Pardoner also 544
A Maunciple / and my self ther were namo
¶ The Millere was a stout carl for the nones
Ful byg he was / of brawn / and eek of bones
That proued wel / for ouer al ther he cam
At wrastlyng / he wolde haue alwey the Ram 548
He was short sholdred / brood / a thikke knarre
Ther nas no dore / þat he ne wolde heue of harre
Or breke it / at a rennyng' with his heed
His berd / as any sowe / or fox was reed 552
And ther to brood / as though it were a spade
Vp on the cope / right of his nose he hade
A werte / and ther on stood a toft of herys
Reed / as the brustles / of a sowes eryl 556
Hise nosethirles / blake were and wyde
A swerd and a bokeler / bar he by his syde
His mouth as greet was / as a greet forneys
He was a Iangler and a goliardeys 560
And that was moost / of synne and harlotries
Wel koude he stelen corn / and tollen thries
And yet he hadde / a thombe of gold pardee
A whit cote / and a blew hood wered he 564
A baggepipe / wel koude he blowe and sowne

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 17

And ther with al / he broghte vs out of towne
A gentil Maunciple / was ther of a temple ¶ Maunciple.
A Of which Achatours / myghte take exemple 568
ffor to be wise / in byynge of vitaille
ffor wheither that he payde / or took by taille
Algate / he wayted so / in his Achaat
That he was ay biforn / and in good staat 572
Now is nat that of god a ful fair grace
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom / of an heepe of lerned men
Of maistres hadde he / mo than thries ten 576
That weren of lawe / expert and curious [leaf 11]
Of whiche / þer weren a duszeyne in that hous
Worthy to been stywardes / of rente and lond
Of any lord / that is in Engelonð 580
To maken hym lyue / by his propre good
In honour dettelees / but if he were wood
Or lyue as scarsly / as hym list desire
And able / for to helpen al a shire 584
In any caas / þat myghte falle or happe
And yet this manciple / sette hir aller cappe
The Reue was / a sclendre colerik man ¶ Reue.
His berd was shaue / as ny as euer he kan 588
His heer was by his crys / ful round yshorn
His tope was doked / lyk a preest biforn
fful longe were his legges / and ful lene
ylyk a staf / ther was no calf ysene 592
Wel koude he kepe a gerner / and a bynne
Ther was noon Auditour / koude of him wynne
Wel wiste he / by the droghte / and by the reyn
The yeldynge / of his seed / and of his greyn 596
His lordes sheepe / his neet his dayerye
His swyn / his hors / his stoor / and his pultrye
Was hoolly / in this Reues gouernyng /
And by his couenant yaf the rekenyng 600
Syn that his lord / was twenty yeer of age

18 GROUP A. §'1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Ther koude no man / brynge hym in Arrerage
 Ther nas baillif ne hierde / nor oother hynne
 That he [ne] knew his sleighte and his couyne 604
 They were adrad of hym / as of the deeth
 His wonyng' was ful faire vp on an heeth
 With grene trees / shadwed was his place
 He koude better than his lord purchace 608
 fful riche he was astored pryuely
 His lord / wel koude he plesen subtilly
 To yeue and lene hym / of his owene good
 And haue a thank / yet a gowne and hood 612
 In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster
 He was a wel good wrighte a Carpenter
 This Reue sat vp on a ful good stot'
 That was al pomely grey / and highte Scot' 616
 A long surcote of pers / vp on he hade
 And by his syde / he baar a rusty blade
 Of Northfolk' was this Reue / of which I telle
 Biside a toun / men clepen Baldeswelle 620
 Tukked he was / as is a frere aboute
 And euere he rood / the hyndreste of oure route
 A Somonour was ther with vs in that place ¶ Somonour.
 That hadde / a fyr reed Cherubynnes face 624
 ffor sawcefleem he was with eyen narwe [leaf 11, back]
 As hoot he was / and lecherous as a sparwe
 With scaled browes blake and piled berf'
 Of his visage / children were aferd' 628
 Ther nas quyk' siluer / lytarge ne brymstoon
 Boras / Ceruce / ne oille of Tartre noon
 Ne oynement' that wolde clense and byte
 That hym myghte helpen / of the wheelkes white 632
 Nor of the knobbes / sittynge on his chekes
 Wel loued he garleek / oynons / and eek lekes
 And for to drynken strong wyn / reed as blood
 Thanne wolde he speke / and crie as he were wood 636
 And whan pat he / wel dronken hadde the wyn

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 19

Than wolde he speke no word but latyn
 A fewe termes hadde he / two or thre
 That he had lerned / out of som decree 640
 No wonder is / he herde it al the day
 And eek ye knowen wel / how þat a Iay
 Kan clepen watte / as wel as kan the pope
 But who so koude in oother thyng^h hym grope 644
 Thanne hadde he spent^h al his Philosophie
 Ay questio quid iuris / wolde he crie
 He was / a gentil harlot^h and a kynde
 A bettre felawe / sholde men noght fynde 648
 He wolde suffre / for a quart of wyn
 A good felawe / to haue his concubyn
 A twelf monthe / and excuse hym atte fulle
 And priuely / a fynch eek koude he pulle 652
 And if he foond owher / a good felawe
 He wolde techen him / to have noon Awe
 In swich caas / of the Ercedekenes curs
 But^h if a mannes soule / were in his purs 656
 ffor in his purs / he sholde ypunysshed be
 Purs / is the Ercedekenes helle seyde he
 But wel I woot / he lyed right in dede
 Of cursyng^h oghte ech gilty man [to] drede 660
 ffor curs wol slee / right as assoillyng^h sauith
 And also / war him of a Significauit/
 In daunger hadde he / at his owene gise
 The yonge girles / of the diocise 664
 And knew hir conseil / and was al hir reed
 A gerland^h / hadde he set vp on his heed
 As greet / as it were for an Ale stake
 A bokeleer / hadde he maad him of a Cake 668
 With hym ther was / a gentil Pardoner ¶ Pardoner.
 Of Rounciuale / his freend and his compeer
 That streight was comen / fro the court of Rome.
 fful loude he soong^h com hider loue to me 672
 This Somonour / bar to hym a stif burdoun [leaf 12]

20 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Was neuere trompe / of half so greet a soun
 This Pardoner hadde heer / as yelow as wex
 But smothe it heeng^t as dooth a strike of flex 676
 By ounces / henge hise lokkes þat he hadde
 And ther with / he hise shuldres ouerspradde
 But thynne it lay / by colpons oon and oon
 But hood for Iolitee / wered he noon 680
 For it was trussed / vp in his walet^t
 Hym thoughte / he rood / al of the newe Iet^t
 Discheuelee saue his cappe / he rood al bare
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare 684
 A vernycle hadde he sowed / vp on his cappe
 His walet^t [lay] biforn hym / in his lappe
 Bret ful of pardon / comen from Rome al hoot/
 A voys he hadde / as smal as hath a goot/ 688
 No berd hadde he / ne neuere sholde haue
 As smothe it was / as it were late shaue
 I trowe / he were a geldyng or a mare
 But of his craft fro Berwyk in to Ware 692
 Ne was ther / swich another Pardoner
 ffor in his male / he hadde a pilwe beer
 Which þat he seyde / was oure lady veyl
 He seyde he hadde / a gobet^t of the seyl 696
 That seint Peter hadde / whan þat he wente
 Vp on the see / til Ihesu crist hym hente
 He hadde a croys of latoñ / ful of stones
 And in a glas / he hadde pigges bones 700
 But with thise relikes / whan þat he fond^t
 A poure person / dwellynge vp on lond^t
 Vp on a day / he gat hym moore moneye
 Than þat the person gat / in Monthes tweye 704
 And thus / with feyned flaterye and lapes
 He made the person and the peple his Apes
 But trewely / to tellen atte laste
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste 708
 Wel koude he rede / a lessou or a storic

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 21

But alderbest / he song an Offertorie
 ffor wel he wiste / whan þat song was songe
 He moste preche / and wel affile his tonge 712
 To wynne siluer / as he ful wel koude
 Therefore he song / the murierly and loude
 N^Ow haue I toold you shortly in a clause
 The staat' tharray / the nombre *and* eek the cause 716
 Why þat assembled was this compaignye
 In Southwerk / at* this gentil hostelrye [• MS. as]
 That highte the Tabard / faste by the belle
 But now is tyme / to yow for to telle 720
 How that we baren vs that ilke nyght [leaf 12, back]
 Whan we were / in that hostelrie alyght
 And after wol I telle / of our viage
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage 724
 But first I pray yow / of youre curteisye
 That ye narete it nat my vileynye
 Thogh þat I pleylnly speke in this mateere
 To telle yow / hir wordes and hir cheere 728
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely
 ffor this ye knowen / al so wel as I
 Who so shal telle a tale / after a man
 He moote reherce / as ny as euere he kan 732
 Euerich a word / if it be in his charge
 Al speke he / neuer so rudeliche or large
 Or ellis / he moot telle his tale vntrewe
 Or feyne thyng'. or fynde wordes newe 736
 He may nat spare / al thogh he were his brother
 He moot as wel / seye o word as another
 Crist' spak hym self / ful brode in hooly writ
 And wel ye woot no vileynye is it 740
 Eek Plato seith / who so kan hym rede
 The wordes / moote be cosyn to the dede
 Also I prey yow / to foryeue it me
 Al haue I nat set folk in hir degree 744
 Heere in this tale / as þat they sholde stonde

22 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

My wit is short' ye may wel vnderstonde
 ¶ Greet chiere made oure hoost vs euerichon
 And to the soper / sette he vs anon 748
 And serued vs / with vitaille at the beste
 Strong was the wyn / and wel to drynke vs leste
 A semely man / oure hoost was with alle
 ffor to been / a Marchal in an halle 752
 A large man he was / with eyen stepe
 A fairer Burgeys / was ther noon in Chepe
 Boold of his speche / and wys and well ytaught'
 And of manhod / hym lakked[e] right naught' 756
 Eek therto / he was right a myrie man
 And after soper / pleyen he bigan
 And spak of myrthe / amonges othere thynges
 Whan that we / hadde maad our rekenynges 760
 And seyde thus / now lordynges trewely
 Ye been to me / right welcome hertely
 ffor by my trouthe / if that I shal nat lye
 I saugh nat this yeer / so myrie a campaignye 764
 Atones in this herberwe as is now
 ffayn wolde I doon yow myrthe / wiste I how
 And of a myrthe / I am right now bythoght'
 To doon yow ese / and it shal coste noght' 768
 ¶ Ye goon to Caunterbury / god yow speede [leaf 13]
 The blisful martir / quite yow youre meede
 And wel I woot / as ye goon by the weye
 Ye shapen yow / to talen and to pleye 772
 ffor trewely / confort' ne myrthe is noon
 To ride by the weye doumb as the stoon
 And therefore / wol I maken yow disport'
 As I seyde erst' and doon yow som confort' 776
 And if yow liketh alle / by oon assent'
 ffor to stonden / at my Iuggement'
 And for to werken / as I shal yow seye
 To morwe / whan ye riden by the weye 780
 Now by my fader soule that is deed'

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 23

But if ye be myrie / I wol yeue yow myn heed
 ¶ Hoold vp youre hond withouten moore speche
 Oure conseil / was nat longe for to seche 784
 Vs thoughte / it was noght worth / to make it wys
 And graunted hym / wit outen moore auys
 And bad him seye his vcirdit as hym leste
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / now herkneth for the beste 788
 But taak it nought / I prey yow in desdeyn
 This is the poynť to speken short and pleyn
 That ech of yow / to shorte with oure weye
 In this viage / shal telle tales tweye 792
 To Caunterburyward / I mene it so
 And homward / he shal tellen othere two
 Of auentures / that whilom han bifalle
 And which of yow / that bereth hym best of alle 796
 That is to seyn / that telleth in this caas
 Tales of best sentence / and moost solaas
 Shal haue a soper / at oure aller cost
 Heere in this place / sittynge by this post 800
 Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury
 And for to make yow / the moore mury
 I wol my self / goodly with yow ryde
 Right at myn owene cost and be youre gyde 804
 And who so wole / my Iuggement withseye
 Shal paye / al that we spenden by the weye
 And if ye vouche sauf / that it be so
 Tel me anon / with outen wordes mo 808
 And I wol erly / shape me therfore
 ¶ This thyng was graunted and oure othes swore
 With ful glad herte / and preyden hym also
 That he would vouche sauf / for to do so 812
 And that he / wolde been oure gouernour
 And of our tales / Iuge and Reportour
 And sette a soper / at a certeyn pris
 And we / wol reuled been at his deuys 816
 ¶ In heigh and lough / and thus by oon assent (leaf 13, back)

24 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

We been acorded / to his Iuggement'
 And ther vp on / the wyn was fet anon
 We dronken / and to reste wente echon 820
 With outen / any lenger taryyng
 Amorwe / whan þat day / gan for to sprynge
 Vp roos oure hoost' and was oure aller cok'
 And gadrede vs togidre / alle in a flok' 824
 And forth we riden / a litel moore than paas
 Vn to the wateryng' of Seint Thomas
 And there oure hoost' bigan his hors areste
 And seyde lordynges / herkneth if yow leste 828
 ¶ Ye woot youre foreward / and [I] it yow recorde
 If euen song / and morwe song accorde
 Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale
 As euere mote I drynke / wyn or ale 832
 Who so be / rebel to my Iuggement'
 Shal paye / for al þat by the wey is spent'
 Now draweth cut' er þat we ferrer twynne
 He / which þat hath the shorteste shal bigynne 836
 Sire knyght quod he / my mayster and my lord'
 Now draweth cut / for that is myn accord'
 Cometh neer quod he / my lady Prioressse
 And ye sire clerk / lat be your shamefastnesse 840
 Ne studieth noght / ley hond to euery man
 Anon to drawen / euery wight bigan
 And shortly / for to tellen as it was
 Were it by auenture / or sort' or cas 844
 The sothe is this / the cut fil to the knyght'
 Of which / ful blithe and glad was every wyght
 And telle he moste his tale / as was resoñ
 By foreward / and by composicioñ 848
 As ye han herd / what nedeth wordes mo
 An whan this goode man / saugh þat it was so
 As he / that wys was and obedient'
 To kepe his foreward / by his free assent' 852
 He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game

GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE Ellesmere MS. 25

What welcome be the cut / a goddes name
Now lat us ryde / and herkneth what I seye
And with that word / we ryden forth oure weye 856
And he bigan / with right a myrie cheere
His tale anon / and seyde in this manere

Iamque domos patrias Sithice post aspera [leaf 14]
gentis presia laurigero &c.

¶ Heere bigynneth the knyghtes tale

WHilom / as olde stories / tellen vs [Painting of the Knight in the margin.]
Ther was a duc þat highte Theseus
Of Atthenes / he was lord and gouernour 861
And in his tyme swich a Conquerour,
That gretter / was ther noon vnder the Sonne
fful many a riche contree hadde he wonne 864
That with his wysdom / and his chiualrie
He conquered / al the regne of ffemenye
That whilom / was ycloped Scithia
And wedded[e] the queene ypolita 868
And broghte hire hoom with hym in his contree
With muchel glorie / and greet solempnytee
And eek hir faire suster Emelye
And thus / with victorie and with melodye 872
Lete I this noble duc / to Atthenes ryde
And al his hoost in Armes hym bisyde
¶ And certes / if it nere / to long to heere
I wolde yow haue toold / fully the manere 876
How wonnen was the regne of ffemenye
By Theseus / and by his chiualrye
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones 880
And how asseged was ypolita
The faire hardy queene of Scithia
And of the feste / þat was at hir weddyng
And of the tempest / at hir hoom comyng 884
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere
I haue god woot / a large feeld to ere
And wayke been / the Oxen in my Plough
The remenant of the tale / is long ynough 888
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 27

Lat euery felawe / telle his tale aboute
 And lat se now / who shal the soper wyne
 And ther I lefte / I wol ayeyn bigynne 892
This duc / of whom I make mencion ¶ Narrative
 Whan he was come / almoost vn to the toun
 In al his wele / and in his mooste pride
 He was war / as he caste his eye aside 896
 Where that ther kneled in the weye
 A compaignye of ladyes / tweye and tweye
 Ech after oother / clad in clothes blake [Leaf 14, back]
 But swich a cry / and swich a wo they make 900
 That in this world / nys creature lyuyng
 That herde / swich another waymentynge
 And of this cry / they nolde neuere stenten
 Til they / the reynes of his brydel henten 904
 ¶ What folk been ye / that at myn hom comynge
 Perturben so my feste / with crynge
 Quod Theseus / haue ye so greet enuye
 Of myn honour / þat thus compleyne and crye 908
 Or who hath yow / mysboden or offended
 And telleth me / if it may been amended
 And why / þat ye been / clothed thus in blak
 ¶ The eldeste lady of hem alle spak 912
 Whan she hadde swowned / with a deedly cheere
 That it was routhe / for to seen and heere
 And seyde lord / to whom ffortune hath yeuen
 Victorie / and as a Conqueror to lyuen 916
 Nat greueth vs / youre glorie and youre honour
 But we / biseken mercy and socour
 Haue mercy on oure wo / and oure distresse
 Som drope of pittee / thurgh thy gentillesse 920
 Vp on vs wrecched wommen / lat thou falle
 ffor certes lord / ther is noon of vs alle
 That she ne hath been / a duchesse / or a queene
 Now be we caytyues / as it is wel seene 924
 Thanked be ffortune / and hire false wheel

28 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

That noon estat assureth to be weel
And certes lord / to abyden youre presence
Heere in the temple / of the goddesse clemence 928
We han ben waitynge / al this fourtenyght
Now help vs lord / sith it is in thy myght
¶ I wrecche / which þat wepe and crie thus
Was whilom wyf / to kyng Cappaneus 932
That starf at Thebes / cursed be that day
And alle we that been in this array
And maken / al this lamentacioun
We losten / alle oure housbondes at that toun 936
Whil that the seege / ther aboute lay
And yet now the olde Creon weylaway
That lord is now / of Thebes the Citee
ffulfd of Ire / and of Iniquitee 940
He for despit and for his tirannye
To do the dede bodyes vileynye
Of alle oure lordes / whiche that been slawe
He hath alle the bodyes / on an heepe ydrawe 944
And wol nat suffren hem / by noon assent
Neither to been yburyed nor ybrent
But maketh houndes / ete hem in despit [leaf 15]
And with that word / with outen moore respit 948
They fillen gruf / and criden pitously
Haue on vs wrecched wommen som mercy
And lat oure sorwe / synken in thyn herte
¶ This gentil duc down from his courser sterte 952
With herte pitous / whan he herde hem speke
Hym thoughte / þat his herte wolde breke
Whan he saugh hem / so pitous and so maat
That whilom weren / of so greet estaat 956
And in his Armes / he hem alle vp hente
And hem conforteth / in ful good entente
And swoor his ooth / as he was trewe knyght
He wolde doon / so ferforthly his myght 960
Vp on the tiraunt Creon / hem to wreke

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 29

That all the peple of Grece / sholde speke	
How Creon / was of Theseus yserued	
As he þat hadde / his deeth ful wel deserued	964
And right anon / with outhen moore abood	
His Baner he desplayeth and forth rood	
To Thebesward / and al his hoost biside	
No neer Atthenes / wolde he go ne ride	968
Ne take his ese / fully half a day	
But onward on his wey / that nyght he lay	
And sente anon / ypolita the queene	
And Emelye / hir yonge suster sheene	972
Vn to the toun of Atthenes to dwelle	
And forth he rit ther is namoore to telle	
T he rede statue of Mars / with spere and targe	
So shyneth / in his white baner large	976
That alle the feeldes / glyteren vp and down	
And by his Baner / born is his penoun	
Of gold ful riche / in which ther was ybete	
The Mynotaur / which þat he slough in Crete	980
¶ Thus rit this duc thus rit this Conquerour	
And in his hoost of Chivalrie the flour	
Til þat he cam to Thebes and alighte	
ffaire in a feeld / ther as he thoughte fighte	984
But shortly / for to speken of this thyng	
With Creon / which þat was of Thebes kyng	
He faught / and slough hym manly as a knyght	
In pleyn bataille / and putte the folk to flyght	988
And by assaut he wan the Citee after	
And rente adoun / bothe wall and sparre and rafter	
And to the ladyes / he restored agayn	
The bones / of hir housbondes that weren slayn	992
To doon obsequies / as was tho the gyse	
But it were al to longe / for to deuysen	
The grete clamour / and the waymentynge	(leaf 14, back)
That the ladyes made / at the brennyng	996
Of the bodies / and the grete honour	

30 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

That Theseus / the noble Conquerour
 Dooth to the ladyes / whan they from hym wente
 But shortly for to telle / is myn entente 1000
 ¶ Whan þat this worthy duc this Theseus
 Hath Creon slayn / and wonne Thebes thus
 Stille in that feeld / he took al nyght his reste
 And dide with al the contree / as hym leste 1004
 ¶ To ransake in the taas / of the bodyes dede
 Hem for to strepe / of harneys and of wede
 The pilours / diden bisynesse and cure
 After the bataille and disconfiture 1008
 And so bifel / þat in the taas they founde
 Thurgh girt with many a greuous bloody wounde
 Two yonge knyghtes / liggyng by and by
 Bothe in oon Armes / wrought ful richely 1012
 Of whiche two / Arcita highte that oon
 And that oother knyght / highte Palamon
 Nat fully quyke / ne fully dede they were
 But by here Cote Armures / and by hir gere 1016
 The heraudes / knewe hem best in special
 As they þat weren / of the blood roial
 Of Thebes / and of sustren two yborn
 Out of the taas / the pilours han hem torn 1020
 And han hem caried / softe vn to the tente
 Of Theseus / and ful soone he hem sente
 To Atthenes / to dwellen in prison
 Perpetuely / he nolde no raunson 1024
 And whan this worthy duc hath thus ydon
 He took his hoost and hoom he rood anon
 With laurer crowned / as a Conquerour
 And ther he lyueth / in ioye and in honour 1028
 Terme of [his] lyue / what nedeth wordes mo
 And in a tour / in angwiss and in wo
 This Palamon / and his felawe Arcite
 ffor euere moore / ther may no gold hem quite 1032
 ¶ This passeth / yeer by yeer / and day by day

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 31

Till it fil ones / in a morwe of May
 That Emelye / þat fairer was to sene
 Than is the lylye / vpon his stalke grene 1036
 And fressher than the May / with floures newe
 ffor with the Rose colour stroof hire hewe
 I noot^t which was the fyner of hem two
 Er it were day / as was hir wone to do 1040
 She was arisen / and al redy digh^t
 ffor May wole haue / no slogardrie a nygh^t
 The sesoñ / priketh / euery gentil herte [leaf 16]
 And maketh hym / out of his slepe to sterte 1044
 And seith arys / and do thyn obseruañce
 This maked Emelye / haue remembrañce
 To doon honour to May / and for to ryse
 Yclothed was she / fressh for to deuyse 1048
 Hir yellow heer / was broyded in a tresse
 Bihynde hir bak / a yerde long I gesse
 And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste
 She walketh vp and down / and as hire liste 1052
 She gadereth floures party / white and rede
 To make a subtil gerland for hire hede
 And as an Aungel / heuenysshly she soong^t
 The grete tour / þat was so thikke and stroong^t 1056
 Which of the Castel / was the chief dongeoñ
 Ther as the knygh^tes / weren in prisoñ
 Of whiche I tolde yow / and tellen shal
 Was euene ioynant to the gardyn wal 1060
 Ther as this Emelye / hadde hir pleyynge
 Bright was the sonne / and cleer that morwenynge
 And this Palamoñ / this woful prisoner
 As was his wone / bi leue of his gayler 1064
 Was risen / and romed / in a chambre an heigh
 In which / he al the noble Citee seigh
 And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches grene
 Ther as this fresshe Emelye the sheene 1068
 Was in hire walk and romed vp and down

32 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

This sorweful prisoner / this Palamoun
 Goth in the chambre / romynge to and fro
 And to hym self / compleynynge of his wo 1072
 That he was born / ful ofte he seyde alas
 And so bifel / by auenture or cas
 That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre
 Of Iren / greet and square as any sparre 1076
 He cast his eye / vpon Emelya
 And ther with al he bleynte and cride .A.
 As though he stongen were vn to the herte
 And with that cry / Arcite anon vp sterte 1080
 And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee
 That art so pale / and deedly on to see
 Why cridestow / who hath thee doon offence
 ffor goddes love / taak al in pacience 1084
 Oure prisoñ / for it may noon oother be
 Fortune / hath yeuen vs this Aduersitee
 Som wikke aspect / or disposicioñ
 Of Saturne / by sum constellacioñ 1088
 Hath yeuen vs this / al though we hadde it sworn
 So stood the heuene / whan þat we were born
 We moste endure / this is the short and playn leaf 16, back
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / and seyde agayn 1092
 Cosyn for sothe / of this opinioñ
 Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioñ
 This prison caused me nat for to crye
 But I was hurt right now thurgh out myn eye 1096
 In to myn herte / that wol my bane be
 The fairnesse / of that lady þat I see
 Yond in the gardyn / romen to and fro
 Is cause / of al my cryng and my wo 1100
 I noot wher she be / womman or goddesse
 But Venus is it / soothly as I gesse
 And ther with al / on knees down he fil
 And seyde Venus / if it be thy wil 1104
 Yow in this gardyn / thus to transfigure

Bifore me / sorweful wrecche creature
 Out of this prisoñ / helpe þat we may scapen
 And if so be / my destynce be shapen 1108
 By eterne word / to dyen in prisoñ
 Of oure lynage / haue som compassion
 That is so lowe ybrought by tirannye
 And with that word / Arcite gan espye 1112
 Wher as this lady / romed to and fro
 And with that sighte / hir beautee hurte hym so
 That if that Palamon / [was] wounded sore
 Arcite is hurt as moche as he / or moore 1116
 And with a sigh / he seyde pitously
 The freshe beautee / sleeth me sodeynly
 Of hire / that rometh / in the yonder place
 And but I haue / hir mercy and hir grace 1120
 That I may seen hire / atte leeste weye
 I nam but deed / ther is namoore to seye
 ¶ This Palamon / whan he tho wordes herde
 Dispitously / he looked and answerde 1124
 Wheither seistow this / in earnest or in pley ?
 ¶ Nay quod Arcite / in earnest by my fey
 God helpe me so / me list ful yuele pleyo
 ¶ This Palamon / gan knytte his browes tweye 1128
 It nere quod he to thee / no greet honour
 ffor to be fals / ne for to be traitour
 To me / þat am thy cosyn and thy brother
 Ysworn ful depe / and ech of vs til oother 1132
 That neuere for to dyen in the peyne
 Til þat deeth / departe shal vs tweyne
 Neither of vs / in loue to hyndre oother
 Ne in noon oother cas / my leue brother 1136
 But þat thou sholdest trewely forthren me
 In euery cas / as I shal forthren thee
 This was thyn ooth / and myn also certeyn (leaf 17)
 I woot right wel / thou darst it nat withseyn 1140
 Thus artow of my conseil out of doute

34 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

And now / thow woldest falsly been aboute
 To loue my lady / whom I loue and serue
 And euere shal / til þat myn herte sterue 1144
 Nay certes false Arcite / thow shalt nat so
 I loued hire first / and tolde thee my wo
 As to my conseil / and to my brother sworn
 To forthre me / as I haue toold biforn 1148
 ffor which / thou art ybounden as a knyght
 To helpen me / if it lay in thy myght
 Or elles artow fals / I dar wel seyn
 ¶ This Arcite / ful proudly spak ageyn 1152
 Thow shalt quod he / be rather fals than I
 And thou art fals / I telle thee outrely
 ffor paramour I loued hire first er thow
 What wiltow seyn / thou wistest nat yet now 1156
 Wheither she be / a womman or goddesse
 Thyn is / affection of hoolynesse
 And myn is loue / as to a creature
 ffor which / I tolde thee myn auenture 1160
 As to my cosyn / and my brother sworn
 I pose / that thow louedest hire biforn
 Wostow nat wel / the olde clerkes sawe
 That / who shal yeue a louere any lawe ¶ *Quis legem dat amantibus.*
 Loue is a gretter lawe / by my pan
 Than may be yeue / of any erthely man
 And therefore / positif lawe and swich decree
 Is broken al day for loue in ech degree 1168
 A man moot nedes loue / maugree his heed
 He may nat flee it thogh he sholde be deed
 Al be she mayde / or wydwe / or elles wyf
 And eek it is nat likly al thy lyf 1172
 To stonden in hir grace / namoore shal I
 ffor wel thou woost thy seluen verrailly
 That thou and I / be dampned to prison
 Perpetuelly / vs gayneth no raunson 1176
 We stryuen / as dide / the houndes for the boon

They foughte al day / and yet hir part was noon
 Ther cam a kyte / whil they weren so wrothe
 And baar away the boon / bitwixe hem bothe 1180
 And therefore / at the kynges court my brother
 Ech man for hym self / ther is noon oother
 Loue if thee list for I loue and ay shal
 And soothly / leue brother this is al 1184
 Heere in this prison / moote we endure
 And euerich of vs / take his auenture
 G Rest was the strif / and long / bitwix hem tweye (cf 17, back)
 If that I hadde / leyser for to seye 1188
 But to theffect / it happed on a day
 To telle it yow / as shortly as I may
 A worthy duc that highte Perotheus
 That felawe was / to duc Theseus 1192
 Syn thilke day / that they were children lite
 Was come to Atthenes / his felawe to visite
 And for to pleye / as he was won[t] to do
 ffor in this world / he loued no man so 1196
 And he loued hym / als tendrely agayn
 So wel they louede / as olde bookes sayn
 That whan þat oon was deed / soothly to telle
 His felawe wente / and soughte hym down in helle 1200
 But of that storie / list me nat to write
 Duc Perotheus / loued wel Arcite
 And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yeer
 And finally / at requeste and preyere 1204
 Of Perotheus / with outen any raunson
 Duc Theseus / hym leet out of prison
 ffely to goon / wher þat hym liste ouer al
 In swich a gyse / as I you tellen shal 1208
 ¶ This was the forward / pleyedly for tendite
 Bitwixen Theseus / and hym Arcite
 That if so were / þat Arcite were yfounde
 Euere in his lif / by day / or nyght or stounde 1212
 In any contree / of this Theseus

36 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

And he were caught it was acorded thus
 That with a swerd / he sholde lese his heed
 Ther nas / noon oother remedie ne reed 1216
 But taketh his leue / and homward he him spedde
 Lat hym be war / his nekke lith to wedde
 ¶ How greet a sorwe / suffreth now Arcite
 The deeth he feeleth / thurgh his herte smyte 1220
 He wepeth / wayleth / crieth pitously
 To sleen hym self / he waiteth priuely
 He seyde allas / that day þat he was born
 Now is my prisoñ / worse than biforn 1224
 Now is me shape / eternally to dwelle
 Nat in my purgatorie / but in helle
 Allas / þat euere knew I Perotheus
 ffor elles / hadde I dwelled with Theseus 1228
 Yfetered in his prisoñ euere mo
 Thanne hadde I been in blisse *and* nat in wo
 Oonly / the sighte of hire / whom þat I serue
 Though þat I neuere / hir grace may deserue 1232
 Wolde han suffised / right ynough for me
 O deere cosyn / Palamon quod he
 Thyn is the victorie / of this auenture [leaf 18r]
 fful blisfully in prison maistow dure 1236
 In prison? certes nay / but in Paradys
 Wel hath ffortune / y-turned thee the dys
 That hast the sighte of hire / and I thabsence
 ffor possible is / syn thou hast hire presence 1240
 And art a knyght a worthy and an able
 That som cas / syn ffortune is chaungeable
 Thow maist to thy desir / som tyme atteyne
 But I / þat am exiled and bareyne 1244
 Of alle grace / and in so greet dispeir
 That ther nys erthe / water / fir / ne eir
 Ne creature / þat of hem maked is
 That may me heele / or doon confort in this 1248
 Wel oughte I sterue / in wanhope and distresse

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 37

farwel / my lif / my lust and my gladnesse
 ¶ Allas / why playnen folk so in commune
 Of purueaunce of god / or of fortune 1252
 That yeueth hem ful ofte / in many a gyse
 Wel bettre / than they kan hem self deuyse
 Som man desireth / for to han richesse
 That cause is of his moerdre / or greet siknesse 1256
 And som man wolde / out of his prison fayn
 That in his hous / is of his meynne slayn
 Infinite harmes / been in this mateere
 We witen nat what [thing] we preyen heere 1260
 We faren / as he that dronke is as a Mous
 A dronke man woot wel / þat he hath an hous
 But he noot which the righte wey is thider
 And to a dronke man / the wey is slider 1264
 And certes / in this world so faren we
 We seken faste / after felicitie
 But we goon wrong ful often trewely
 Thus may we seyn alle / and namely I 1268
 That wende / and hadde a greet opinion
 That if I myghte / escapen from prison
 Thanne hadde I been in ioye / and perfit heele
 That now / I am exiled fro my wele 1272
 Syn þat I may nat seen you Emelye
 I nam but deed / ther nys no remedye
 ¶ Vp on that oother syde / Palamon
 Whan þat he wiste / Arcite was agon 1276
 Swich sorwe he maketh / þat the grete tour
 Resounded / of his youlyng and clamour
 The pure fettres / on his shynes grete
 Weren / of his bittre salte teeres wete 1280
 Allas quod he / Arcite cosyn myn
 Of al oure strif / god woot the fruyt is thyn
 Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large [leaf 18, back
 And of my wo / thow yeuest litel charge 1284
 Thou mayst / syn thou hast wysdom and manhede

38 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

Assemblen / alle the folk / of oure kynrede
 And make a weire / so sharpe on this Citee
 That by som auenture / or som trettee 1288
 Thow mayst haue hire to lady and to wyf
 ffor whom / þat I moste nedes lese my lyf
 ffor / as by wey of possibilittee
 Sith thou art at thy large / of prison free 1292
 And art a lord / greet is thyn anauntage
 Moore than is myn / þat sterue here in a cage
 ffor I moot wepe / and wayle whil I lyue
 With al the wo / þat prison may me yeue 1296
 And eek with peyne / þat loue me yeueth also
 That doubleth / al my torment / and my wo
 Ther with / the fyr of Ialousie vp sterte
 With Inne his brest and hente him by the herte 1300
 So woodly / that he lyk was to biholde
 The Boxtree / or the Asshen dede and colde
 ¶ Thanne seyde he / o crueel gooddes þat gouerne
 This world / with byndyng of youre word eterne 1304
 And writen in the table of Atthamaunt
 Yourre parlement and youre eterne graunt
 What is mankynde / moore vn to you holde
 Than is the sheepe / þat rouketh in the folde 1308
 ffor slayn is man / right as another beest
 And dwelleth eek / in prison and arreest
 And hath siknesse / and greet aduersitee
 And ofte tymes / gilt[e]les pardee 1312
 ¶ What gouernance / is in this prescience
 That gilt[e]les / tormenteth Innocence
 And yet encresseth this / al my penaunce
 That man is bounden / to his observaunce 1316
 ffor goddes sake / to letten of his wille
 Ther as a beest / may al his lust fulfille
 And whan a beest is deed / he hath no peyne
 But after his deeth / man moot wepe and pleyne 1320
 Though in this world / he haue care and wo

With outen doute / it may stonden so
 The answe're of this / lete I to dyuynys
 But well I woot þat in this world greet pyme ys 1324
 Allas / I se a serpent' or a theef /
 That many a trewe man / hath doon mescheef'
 Goon at his large / and where hym list may turne
 But I moot been in prison / thurgh Saturne 1328
 And eek thurgh Juno / Ialous and eek wood
 That hath destroyed / wel ny al the blood
 Of Thebes / with hise waste walles wyde (leaf 12)
 And venus / sleeth me on that oother syde 1332
 ffor Ialousie / and fere of hym Arcite
 ¶ Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite
 And lete hym / in his prison stille dwelle
 And of Arcite / forth I wol yow telle 1336
 ¶ The sonne passeth / and the nyghtes longe
 Encressen double wise / the peynes stronge
 Bothe / of the louere / and the prisoner
 I noot' which hath the wofuller mester 1340
 ffor shortly for to seyn / this Palamon
 Perpetuely / is dampned to prison
 In cheynes and in fetters / to been deed
 And Arcite / is exiled vpon his heed 1344
 ffor euere mo / as out of that contree
 Ne neuere mo / he shal his lady see
 N Ow loueres / axe I now this question
 Who hath the worse / Arcite / or Palamon? 1348
 That oon may seen his lady / day by day
 But in prison / he moot dwelle alway
 That oother / wher hym list may ride or go
 But seen his lady / shal he neuere mo 1352
 Now demeth as yow list ye that kan
 ffor I wol telle forth / as I bigan.

¶ Explicit prima Pars.

¶ Sequitur pars secunda 𐀓

Whan that Arcite / to Thebes comen was
 fful ofte a day / he swelte and seyde allas 1356
 ffor seen his lady / shal he neuere mo
 And shortly / to concluden al his wo
 So muche sorwe / hadde neuere creature
 That is / or shal / whil þat the world may dure 1360
 His slepe / his mete / his drynke / is hym biraft
 That lene he wexeth / and drye as is a shaft
 Hise eyen holwe / and grisly to biholde
 His hewe falow / and pale as Asshen colde 1364
 And solitarie he was / and euere allone
 And waillynge al the nyght makyng his mone
 And if he herde / song or Instrument
 Thanne wolde he wepe / he myghte nat be stent 1368
 So feble eek were hise spiritz and so lowe
 And chaunged so / that no man koude knowe
 His speche nor his voys / though men it herde
 And in his geere / for al the world he ferde 1372
 Nat oonly / lik the louveris maladye [leaf 12, back]
 Of Hereos / but rather lyk Manye ¶ Mania
 Engendred / of humour malencolik
 Biform his owene Celle fantastik 1376
 And shortly / turned was al vp so doun
 Bothe habit / and eek disposicioun
 Of hym this woful louere daun Arcite
 ¶ What sholde I / al day of his wo endite 1380
 Whan he endured hadde / a yeer or two
 This cruell torment and this peyne *and* woo
 At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde
 Vp on a nyght / in sleepe as he hym leyde 1384
 Hym thoughte / how that the wynged god Mercurie
 Biform hym stood / and bad hym to be murie
 His slepy yerde / in hond he bar vprighte
 An hat he werede / vp hise heris brighte 1388

Arrayed was this god / as I took keepe
 As he was / whan þat Argus took his sleepe
 And seyde hym thus / to Atthenes shaltou wende
 Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende 1392
 And with that word / Arcite wook' and sterte
 Now trewely / hou soore þat me smerte
 Quod he / to Atthenes / right now wol I fare
 Ne for the drede of deeth / shal I nat spare 1396
 To se my lady / that I loue and serue
 In hire presence / I recche nat to sterue
 ¶ And with that word / he caughte a greet Mirour
 And saugh / þat chaunged was al his colour 1400
 And saugh his visage / al in another kynde
 And right anon / it ran hym in his mynde
 That sith his face / was so disfigured
 Of maladye / the which he hadde endured 1404
 He myghte wel / if þat he bar hym lowe
 Lyue in Atthenes / eueremoore vnknowe
 And seen his lady / wel ny day by day
 And right anon / he chaunged his array 1408
 And cladde hym / as a poure laborer
 And al allone / saue oonly a Squier
 That knew his priuete / and al his cas
 Which was disguised / pourely as he was 1412
 To Atthenes / is he goon the nexte way
 And to the court he wente vp on a day
 And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse
 To drugge and drawe / what so men wol deuysse 1416
 And shortly / of this matere for to seyn
 He fil in office / with a Chamberleyn
 The which þat dwellynge was with Emelye
 ffor he was wys / and koude soone espye 1420
 Of euery seruaut which that serueth here [leaf 20]
 Wel koude he / hewen wode / and water bere
 ffor he was yong / and myghty for the nones
 And ther to / he was long / and big' of bones 1424

42 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

To doon / that any wight / kan hym deuyse
 A yeer or two / he was in this seruyse
 Page of the chambre / of Emelye the brighte
 And Philostrate / he seyde þat he highte 1428
 But half / so wel / biloued a man as he
 Ne was ther neuere in Court' of his degree
 He was so gentil of his condicioun
 That thurghout al the Court' was his renoun 1432
 They seyden / that it were a charitee
 That Theseus / wolde enhauncen his degree
 And putten hym / in worshipful seruyse
 Ther as he myghte / his vertu excercise 1436
 And thus / with Inne a while / his name is spronge
 Bothe of hise dedes / and his goode tonge
 That Theseus / hath taken hym so neer
 That of his chambre / he made hym a Squier 1440
 And gaf him gold / to mayntene his degree
 And eek' men broghte hym / out of his contree
 ffrom yeer to yeer / ful pryuely his rente
 But honestly / and slyly he it spente 1444
 That no man wondred / how þat he it hadde
 And thre yeer in this wise / his lif he ladde
 And bar hym so / in pees / and eek in werre
 Ther was no man / þat Theseus hath derre 1448
 And in this blisse / lete I now Arcite
 And speke I wole / of Palamon a lite
 I N derknesse and horrible / and strong prison
 Thise seuen yeer / hath seten Palamon 1452
 fforpyned / what for wo / and for distresse
 Who feeleth / double soor heynesse
 But Palamon / that loue destreyneth so
 That wood out of his wit' he goth for wo 1456
 And eek ther to / he is a prisoner
 Perpetuelly / nocht oonly / for a yer
 ¶ Who koude ryme in englyssh proprely
 His martirdom / for sothe it am nat I . 1460

Therefore I passe / as lightly as I may
 ¶ It fel / that in the seuenthe yer in May
 The thridde nyght as olde bookes seyn
 That al this storie / tellen moore pleyn 1464
 Were it by auenture or / destynee
 As whan a thyng is shapen / it shal be
 That soone after the mydnyght Palamon
 By helpyng of a freend / brak his prison 1468
 ¶ And fleeth the Citee / faste as he may go [leaf 20, back]
 ffor he hade yeue / his gayler drynke so
 Of a Clarree maad / of a certeyn wyn
 Of Nercotikes / and Opie of Thebes fyn ¶ Opium Thebaicum.
 That al that nyght thogh þat men wolde him shake
 The gayler sleeps / he myghte nat awake
 ¶ And thus he fleeth / as faste as euere he may
 The nyght was short and faste by the day 1476
 That nodes cost he moot hym seluen hyde
 And til a groue / faste ther bisyde
 With dredeful foot thanne stalketh Palamon
 ffor shortly / this was his opinion 1480
 That in that groue / he wolde hym hyde al day
 And in the nyght / thanne wolde he take his way
 To Thebes ward / his freendes for to preye
 On Theseus / to helpe him to werreye 1484
 And shortly / outhere he wolde lese his lif
 Or wynnen Emelye / vn to his wyf
 This is theeffect and his entente pleyn
 ¶ Now wol I turne / to Arcite ageyn 1488
 That litel wiste / how ny þat was his care
 Til þat ffortune / had broght him in the snare
 The biy larke / messager of day
 Salueth in hir song / the morwe gray 1492
 And firy Phebus / riseth vp so brighte
 That al the Orient laugheth of the lighte
 And with hise stromes / dryeth in the greues
 The siluer drops / hangyng on the leues 1496

44 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

And Arcita / that is in the court Roial
 With Theseus / his Squier principal
 Is risen / and looketh on the myrie day
 And for to doon / his obseruaunce to May 1500
 Remembrynge / on the poynt of his desir
 He on a Courser / startlynge as the fir
 Is riden in to the feeldes / hym to pleye
 Out of the Court were it a myle or tweye 1504
 And to the groue / of which þat I yow tolde
 By auenture / his wey / he gan to holde
 To maken hym / a gerland / of the greues
 Were it of wodebynde / or hawethorn leues 1508
 And loude he song ayeyn the sonne shene
 May / with alle thy floures and thy grene
 Wel come be thou / faire fresshe May
 In hope / þat I som grene gete may 1512
 And from his courser / with a lusty herte
 In to a groue / ful hastily he sterte
 And in a path / he rometh vp and down
 Ther as by auenture / this Palamon 1516
 Was in a bussh / that no man myghȝte hym se [leaf 21]
 ffor soore aferd of his deeth / thanne was he
 No thyng ne knew he / that it was Arcite
 God woot he wolde haue trowed it ful lite 1520
 But sooth is seyð / go sithen many yeres
 That feeld hath eyen / and the wode hath eres
 It is ful fair / a man to bere hym euene
 ffor al day / meetoth men at vnset steuene 1524
 ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe
 That was so ny / to herknen al his sawe
 ffor in the bussh / he sitteth now ful stille
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite / hadde romed al his fillo 1528
 And songen al the roundel lustily
 In to a studie / he fil al sodeynly
 As doon thise loueres / in hir queynte geres
 Now in the crope / now down in the breres 1532

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 45

Now vp / now down / as boket in a welle
 Right as the friday / soothly for to telle
 Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste
 Right so / kan geery Venus ouer caste 1536
 The hertes of hir folk / right as hir day
 Is gereful / right so chaungeth she array
 Selde is the friday / al the wowke ylike
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite had songe / he gan to sike 1540
 And sette hym down / with outen any moore
 Allas quod he / that day þat I was bore
 How longe Iuno / thurgh thy crueltee
 Woltow werreyen Thebes the Citee 1544
 Allas / ybrought is to confusioñ
 The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphioñ ¶ Cadmus
 Of Cadmus / which þat was the firste man
 That Thebes bulte / or first the toun bigan 1548
 And of the Citee / first was crouned kyng
 Of his lynage am I / and his of spryng /
 By verray ligne / as of the stok roial
 And now I am / so caytyf / and so thral 1552
 That he / that is my mortal enemy
 I serue hym / as his squier pourely
 And yet / dooth Iuno me / wel moore shame
 ffor I dar noght biknowe myn owene name 1556
 But ther as I / was wont to highte Arcite
 Now highte I Philostrate / noght worth a myte
 Allas thou felle Mars / allas Iuno
 Thus hath youre Ire / oure kynrede al fordo 1560
 Saue only me / and wrecched Palamoon
 That Theseus / martireth in prisoñ
 And ouer al this / to sleen me outrely
 Loue hath / his firy dart so brennyngly 1564
 Ystiked / thurgh my trewe careful herte [leaf 21, back]
 That shapen was my deeth / erst than my sherte
 Ye sleen me / with youre eyen Emelye
 Ye been the cause / wherfore þat I dye 1568

46 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

Of al the remenant of myn oother care
 Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare
 So þat I koude / doon aught to youre plesance
 And with that word / he fil down in a traunce 1572
 A longe tyme / and after he vp sterte
 ¶ This Palamon / þat thoughte þat thurgh his herte
 He felte a coold sword / sodeynliche glyde
 ffor Ire he quook / no lenger wolde he byde 1576
 And whan þat he / had herd Arcites tale
 As he were wood / with face / deed and pale
 He stirte hym vp / out of the buskes thikke
 And seide Arcite / false traytour wikke 1580
 Now artow hent that louest my lady so
 ffor whom þat I haue / al this peyne and wo
 And art my blood / and to my conseil sworn
 As I ful ofte / haue seyde thee heer biforn 1584
 And hast byiaped heere / duc Theseus
 And falsly / chaunged hast / thy name thus
 I wol be deed / or elles thou shalt dye
 Thou shalt nat / loue my lady Emelye 1588
 But I wol loue hire oonly / and namo
 ffor I am Palamon / thy mortal foo
 And though þat I no wepene haue in this place
 But out of prison / am astert by grace 1592
 I drede noght / þat outhur thou shalt dye
 Or thou ne shalt nat louen Emelye
 Chees which thou wolt or thou shalt nat asterte
 ¶ This Arcite / with ful despitous herte 1596
 Whan he hym knew / and hadde his tale herd
 As fiers as leon / pulled out his swerd
 And seyde thus / by god þat sit aboue
 Nere it / þat thou art sik and wood for loue 1600
 And eek þat thou no wepne hast in this place
 Thou sholdest neuere / out of this groue pace
 That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond
 ffor I defye / the seurete and the bond 1604

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 47

Which that thou seist þat I haue maad to thee
 What verray fool / thynk' wel / þat loue is fre
 And I wol loue hire / mawgree al thy myght
 But for as muche / thou art a worthy knyght 1608
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille
 Haue heer my trouthe / tomorwe I wol nat failo
 With oute wityng' of any oother wight
 That heere / I wol be founden as a knyght 1612
 And bryngen harneys / right ynough for thee [leaf 23]
 And chese the beste / and leue the worste for me
 And mete and drynke / this nyght wol I brynge
 Ynough for thee / and clothes for thy beddyng 1616
 And if so be / that thou my lady wynne
 And sle me in this wode / ther I am Inne
 Thow mayst wel haue thy lady / as for me
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee 1620
 And thus they been departed / til amorwe
 Whan ech of hem / had leyd his feith to borwe
 O Cupide / out of alle charitee
 O regne / þat wolt no felawe haue with thee 1624
 ful sooth is seyde / þat loue ne lordshipe
 Wol noght hir thankes / haue no felaweshipe
 Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamon
 Arcite is riden anon / vn to the toun 1628
 And on the morwe / er it were dayes light
 ful priuely / two harneys hath he dight
 Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
 The bataille in the feeld / bitwix hem tweyne 1632
 And on his hors / allone as he was born
 He carieth / al the harneys / hym biforn
 And in the groue / at tyme and place yset
 This Arcite / and this Palamon ben met 1636
 To chaungen / gan the colour in hir face
 Right as the nunters / in the regne of Trace
 That stondeth at the gappe with a spere
 Whan hunted is / the leon and the bere 1640

And hereth hym / come russahyng' in the greues
 And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues
 And thynketh / heere cometh my mortal enemy
 With oute faile / he moot be deed / or I; 1644
 ffor outhur / I moot sleen hym at the gappe
 Or he moot sleen me / if þat me myshappe
 So ferden they / in chaungyng' of hir hewe
 As fer / as euerich of hem oother knewe 1648
 ¶ Ther nas no good day ne no saluyng'
 But streight' with outen word / or rehersyng'
 Euerich of hem / heelpes for to armen oother
 As freenly / as he were his owene brother 1652
 And after that' with sharpe speres stronge
 They foynen ech at oother wonder longe
 Thou myghtest wene / that this Palamon
 In his fightyng' were [as] a wood leon 1656
 And as a cruell Tigre was Arcite
 As wilde bores / gonne they to smyte
 That frothen whit as foom / for Ire wood
 Vp to the Anclee / foghte they in hir blood 1660
 ¶ And in this wise / I lete hem fightyng dwelle [leaf 22, back]
 And forth I wole / of Theseus yow telle
 The destinee / Ministre general
 That executeth / in the world ouer al 1664
 The purueiaunce / that god hath seyn biforn
 So strong it is / þat though the world had sworn
 The contrarie of a thyng' by ye or nay
 Yet somtyme / it shal fallen on a day 1668
 That falleth nat eft' with Inne a thousand yeere
 ffor certainly / oure appetites heere
 Be it' of werre / or pees / or hate / or loue
 Al is this reuled / by the sighte aboue 1672
 ¶ This mene I now / by myghty Theseus
 That for to hunten / is so desirus
 And namely / at the grete hert in May
 That in his bed / ther daweth hym no day 1676

That he nys clad / and redy for to ryde
 With hunte and horn / and houndes hym bisyde
 ffor in his huntyng'. hath he swich delit
 That it is / al his ioye and appetit 1680
 To been hym self / the grete hertes bane
 ffor after Mars / he serueth now dyane
 ¶ Cleer was the day / as I haue toold er this
 And Theseus / with alle ioye and blis 1684
 With his ypolita / the faire queene
 And Emelye / clothed al in grene
 On huntyng be they riden roially
 And to the groue / that stood ful faste by 1688
 In which ther was an hert' as men hym tolde
 Duc Theseus / the streighte wey hath holde
 And to the launde / he rideth hym ful right/
 ffor thider was the hert' wont haue his flight 1692
 And ouer a brook / and so forth in his weye
 This duc. wol han a cours at hym or tweye
 With houndes / swiche as hym list comaunde
 ¶ And whan this duc' was come vn to the launde 1696
 Vnder the sonne he looketh / and anon
 He was war / of Arcite and Palamon
 That foughten brems / as it were bores two
 The brighte swerdes / wenten to and fro 1700
 So hidously / that with the leeste strook'
 It semed / as it wolde fille an ook'
 But what they were / no thyng' he ne woot'
 This duc' his courser / with his spores smoot' 1704
 And at a stert' he was bitwix hem two
 And pulled out a swerd / and cride hoo
 Namore / vp on peyne of lesynge of youre heed
 By myghty Mars / he shal anon be deed 1708
 That smyteth any strook'. that I may seen [leaf 22]
 But telleth me / what mystiers men ye been
 That been so hardy / for to fighten heere
 With outen Iuge / or oother Officere 1712

As it were / in a lystes roially
 ¶ This Palamon / answerde hastily
 And seyde / sire / what nedeth wordes mo
 We haue / the deeth / deserued bothe two 1716
 Two woful wrecches been we / two caytyues
 That been encombred / of oure owene lyues
 And as thou art a rightful lord and Iuge
 Ne yeue vs / neither mercy ne refuge 1720
 But sle me first for seinte charitee
 But sle my felawe eek as wel as me
 Or sle hym first. for though thou knowest it lite
 This is thy mortal foo / this is Arcite · 1724
 That fro thy lond / is banysshid on his heed
 ffor which / he hath deserued to be deed
 ffor this is he / þat cam vn to thy gate
 And seyde / þat he highte Philostrate 1728
 Thus hath he iaped thee / ful many a yer
 And thou hast maked hym thy chief Squier
 And this is he / that loueth Emelye
 ffor sith the day is come / þat I shal dye 1732
 I make pleynty / my confessiō
 That I am / thilke woful Palamon
 That hath / thy prisiō broken wikkedly
 I am thy mortal foo / and it am I 1736
 That loueth so hote / Emelye the brighte
 That I wol dye / present in hir sighte
 Therefore I axe deeth / and my Iuise
 But sle my felawe / in the same wise 1740
 ffor bothe / han we deserued to be slayn
 ¶ This worthy duc answerde anon agayn
 And seyde / this is a short conclusiō
 Youre owene mouth / by youre confessiō 1744
 Hath dampned yow / and I wol it recorde
 It nedeth noght / to pyne yow with the corde
 Ye shal be deed / by myghty Mars the rede
 ¶ The queene anon / for verray wommanhede 1748

Gan for to wepe / and so dide Emelye
 And alle the ladyes / in the compaignye
 Greet pitee was it' as it thoughte hem alle
 That euere / swich a chaunce sholde falle 1752
 ffor gentil men they were / of greet estaat'
 And no thyng' but for loue was this debaat'
 And saugh hir bloody woundes / wyde and soore
 And alle crieden / bothe lasse and moore 1756
 Haue mercy Lord / vp on vs wommen alle (leaf 52, back)
 And on hir bare knees / adoun they falle
 And wolde haue kist his feet' ther as he stood
 Til at the laste / aslaked was his mood 1760
 ffor pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 And though / he first' for Ire quook and sterte
 He hath considered / shortly in a clause
 The trespas of hem bothe / and eek the cause 1764
 And al though þat his Ire / hir gilt accused
 Yet in his resoñ / he hem bothe excused
 And thus / he thoghte wel þat euery man
 Wol helpe hym self in loue / if that he kan 1768
 And eek' deliuere hym self / out of prison
 And eek' his herte hadde compassion
 Of wommen / for they wepen euere in oon
 And / in his gentil herte / he thoughte anon 1772
 And softe vn to hym self / he seyde fy /
 Vp on a lord / that wol haue no mercy ¶ *Notate domini.*
 But been a leon / bothe in word and dede
 To hem / þat been in repentañce and drede 1776
 As wel / as to a proud despitous man
 That wol maynteyne / that he first bigan
 That lord / hath litel of discrecion
 That in swich cas / kan no diuision 1780
 But weyeth / pride and humblesse after oon
 And shortly / whan his Ire / is thus agoon
 He gan to looken vp / with eyen lighte
 And spak thise same wordes / al on highte 1784

52 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

¶ The god of loue / A benedicite
 How myghty / and how greet a lord is he
 Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles
 He may be cleped a god / for hise myracles 1788
 ffor he kan maken / at his owene gyse
 Of euerich herte / as þat hym list diuyse
 Lo heere this Arcite / and this Palamon
 That quitly weren / out of my prison 1792
 And myghte / han lyued in Thebes roially
 And witen / I am hir mortal enemy
 And þat hir deth / lith in my myght also
 And yet hath loue / maugree hir eyen twe 1796
 [Y-]Broght hem hyder / bothe for to dye
 Now looketh / is nat that an heigh folye
 ¶ Who may [nat] been a fole / but if he loue
 Bihold / for goddes sake þat sit aboue 1800
 Se how they blede / be they noght wel arrayed
 Thus hath hir lord / the god of loue ypayed
 Hir wages / and hir fees / for hir seruyse
 And yet they wenen / for to been ful wyse 1804
 That seruen loue / for aught that may bifalle [leaf 24]
 But this is yet the beste game of alle
 That she / for whom they han this Iolitee
 Kan hem ther fore / as muche thank / as me 1808
 She woot namoore / of al this hoot fare
 By god / than woot a Cokkow of an hare
 But all moot ben assayed / hoot and coold
 A man moot ben a fool / or yong or oold 1812
 I woot it by my self / ful yore agon
 ffor in my tyme / a seruant was I oon
 And therefore / syn I knowe of loues peyne
 And woot hou soore / it kan a man distreyn 1816
 As he / þat hath / ben caught ofte in his laas
 I yow foryeue / al hoolly this trespaas
 At requeste of the queene / þat kneleth heere
 And eck of Emelye / my suster deere 1820

And ye shul bothe / anon vn to me swere
 That neuere mo / ye shal my contree dere
 Ne make werre vp on me nyght ne day
 But been my freendes / in al that ye may 1824
 I yow foryeue / this trespas euery deel
 And they him sworn / his axying faire *and* weel
 And hym of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde
 And he hem graunteth *grace* / and thus he seyde 1828
TO speke / of roial lynage and richesse
 Though þat she were a queene or a princesse
 Ech of you bothe / is worthy doutelees
 To wedden whan tyme is doutelees 1832
 I speke / as for my suster Emelye
 ffor whom ye haue / this strif *and* Ialousye
 Ye woot your self she may nat wedden two
 Atones / though ye fighten eueremo 1836
 That oon of you / al be hym looth or lief/
 He moot[e] pipen / in an yuy leef
 This is to seyn / she may nat now han bothe
 Al be ye neuer so Ialouse / ne so wrothe 1840
 And for thy / I yow putte in this degree
 That ech of yow / shal haue his destynne
 As hym is shape / and herkneth in what wyse
 Lo heere your ende / of that I shal deuyse 1844
My wyl is this / for plat conclusiõ
 With outen / any replicaciõ
 If that you liketh / take it for the beste
 That euerich of you / shal goon where hym leste 1848
 ffely / with outen raunson / or daunger
 And this day fifty wykes / fer ne ner
 Euerich of you / shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
 Armed for lystes / vp at alle rightes 1852
 ¶ Al redy / to darreyne hire by bataille (leaf 24, back)
 And this bihote I yow / with outen faille
 Vp on my trouthe / and as I am a knyght
 That wheither of yow bothe þat hath myght 1856

54 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

This is to seyn / that wheither he or thow
 May with his hundred / as I spak of now
 Sleen his contrarie / or out of lystes dryue
 Thanne shal I yeue / Emelya to wyue 1860
 To whom þat fortune / yeueth so fair a grace
 Tho lystes / shal I maken in this place
 And god so wisly / on my soule rewe
 As I shal euene Iuge been and trewe 1864
 Ye shul noon oother ende / with me maken
 That oon of yow / ne shal be deed or taken
 And if yow thynketh / this is weel ysayd
 Seyeth youre auys / and holdeth you apayd 1868
 This is youre ende / and youre conclusiō
 ¶ Who looketh lightly now / but Palamon
 Who spryngeth vp for ioie / but Arcite
 Who kouthe telle / or who kouthe endite 1872
 The ioie / þat is maked in the place
 Whan Theseus / hath doon so fair a grace
 But down on knees / wente every maner wight
 And thonken hym / with al hir herte and myght 1876
 And namely the Thebens often sithe
 And thus with good hope / and with herte blithe
 They taken hir leue / and homward gonne they ride
 To Thebes / with hise olde walles wyde 1880

¶ Explicit secunda pars

¶ Sequitur pars tercia

I trowe / men wolde deme it negligence
 If I foryete / to tellen the dispence
 Of Theseus / that gooth so bisily
 To maken vp / the lystes roially 1884
 That swich a noble Theatre / as it was
 I dar wel seyn / in this world ther nas
 The circuit / a myle was aboute
 Walled of stoon / and dyched al with oute 1888
 Round was the shape / in manere of compaas

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 55

ful of degrees / the heighte of sixty pas
 That whan a man / was set / on o degree
 He lette nat' his felawe for to see 1892
 ¶ Estward / ther stood a gate of Marbul whit/
 Westward right swich another in the opposit'
 ¶ And shortly to concluden / swich a place [leaf 25]
 Was noon in erthe / as in so litel space 1896
 for in the lond / ther was no crafty man
 That geometric or Ars Metrik kan
 Ne portreitour / ne keruere of ymages
 That Theseus / ne yaf [him] mete and wages 1900
 The Theatre / for to maken and deuyse
 And for to doon / his ryte and sacrificse
 He Estward / hath vp on the gate aboue
 In worships of Venus goddesse of loue 1904
 Doon make an Auter / and an Oratorie
 And on the westward / in memorie
 Of Mars / he maked hath right swich another
 That coste largely / of gold a fother 1908
 And Northward / in a Touret / on the wal
 Of Alabastre whit' and reed coral
 An Oratorie / riche for to see
 In worships of Dyane of Chastitee 1912
 Hath Theseus doon wroght' in noble wyse
 ¶ But yet' hadde I foryeten to deuyse
 The noble keruyng' and the portreitures
 The shap' / the contenaunce and the figures 1916
 That weren / in thise Oratories thre
 ¶ first' in the temple of Venus / maystow se
 Wroght' on the wal / ful pitous to biholde
 The broken slepes / and the sikes colde 1920
 The sacred teeris / and the waymentynge
 The firy strokes / and the desiryng
 That loues seruauantz / in this lyf enduren
 The othes / that her couenantz assuren 1924
 Plesaunce and hope / desir foolhardynesse

Beautee and youthe / bauderie richesse	
Charmes and force / lesynges flaterye	
Despense / bisynesse and Ialousye	1928
That wered of yelewe gooldes a gerland	
And a Cokkow / sittynge on hir hand	
ffestes / Instrumentz / caroles daunces	
Lust and array / and alle the circumstaunces	1932
Of loue / whiche þat I rekned haue / and rekne shal	
By ordre / weren peynted on the wal	
And mo / than I kan make of mencion	
ffor soothly / al the mount of Citheron	1936
Ther Venus / hath hir principal dwellynge	
Was shewed on the wal / in portreyynge	
With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse	
Nat was foryeten / the Porter ydelnesse	1940
Ne Narcisus the faire / of yore agon	
And yet the folye / of kyng Salamon	
¶ And eek the grete strengthe of Ercules	(leaf 23, back)
Thenchauntementz of Medea and Circes	1944
Ne of Turnus / with the hardy fiers corage	
The riche Cresus / kaytyf / in seruage	
Thus may ye seen / þat wysdom ne richesse	
Beautee ne sleighte / strengthe hardynesse	1948
Ne may with Venus / holde champartie	
ffor as hir list the world than may she gye	
Lo alle thise folk so caught were in hir las	
Til they for wo / ful ofte seyde allas	1952
Suffiseth heere / ensamples oon or two	
And though / I koude rekene a thousand mo	
The statue of Venus / glorious for to se	
Was naked / fletynge in the large see	1956
And fro the nauele down / al couered was	
With wawes grene / and brighte as any glas	
A Citole / in hir right hand / hadde she	
And on hir heed / ful semely for to se	1960
A Rose gerland fresch / and wel smellynge	

Aboue hir heed / hir dowues flikerynge
 Biforn hire / stood hir sone Cupido
 Vp on his shuldres / wynges hadde he two 1964
 And blynd he was / as it was often seene
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and kene
 ¶ Why sholde I noght / as wel eek telle yow al
 The portreiture / that was vp on the wal 1968
 Wit~~h~~ Inne the temple / of myghty Mars the rede
 Al peynted was the wal / in lengthe and brede
 Lyk to the estres / of the grisly place
 That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace 1972
 In thilke colde / frosty Region
 Ther as Mars / hath his souereyn mansion
 ¶ first on the wal / was peynted a forest
 In which ther dwelleth / neither man ne best 1976
 With knotty knarry / bareyne trees olde
 Of stubbes sharpe / and hidouse to biholde
 In which ther ran / a rumbel and a swough
 As though a storm / sholde bresten euery bough 1980
 And downward from an hille / vnder a bente
 Ther stood the temple of Mars Armypotente
 Wroght al of burned steel / of which the entree
 Was long and streit and gastly for to see 1984
 And ther out came a rage / and suche a veze
^{i. impetus}
 That it made / al the gate for to rese
 The Northren lyght in at the dores shoon
 ffor wyndowe / on the wal ne was ther noon 1988
 Thurgh which men myghten / any light discerne
 The dore was al / of Adamant eterne
 Yclenched / ouerthwart and endelong (leaf 26)
 With Iren tough / and for to make it strong 1992
 Euery pylor the temple to sustene
 Was tonne greet of Iren bright and shene
 ¶ Ther saugh I first the dirke ymaginyng
 Of felonye / and the compassyng 1996
 The crucl Ire / reed as any gleede

58 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

The pykepurs / and the pale drede
 The smylere / with the knyfe vnder the cloke
 The shepne / brennyng / with the blake smoke 2000
 The treson / of the mordryng in the bedde
 The open werre / with woundes al bibleddes
 Contek' with bloody knyfe and sharpe manace
 Al ful of chirkyng'. was that sory place 2004
 ¶ The sleere of hym self / yet saugh I ther
 His herte blood / hath bathed al his heer
 The nayl ydryuen / in the shode a nyght
 The colde deeth / with mouth gapyng' vp right 2008
 Amyddes of the temple / sat meschaunce
 With discomfort' and sory contenaunce
 ¶ Yet saugh I woodnesse / laughyng in his rage
 Armed compleint' out hees / and fiers outrage 2012
 The careyne in the busk' with throte ycorue
 A thousand slayn / and nat oon of qualm ystorue
 The tiraunt' with the pray by force yraft'
 The toun destroyed / ther was no thy[ng left'] [1 in a later hand]
 ¶ Yet saugh I brent' the shippes hoppesteres
 The hunte strangled / with the wilde beres
 The sowe / frenen the child right in the Cradel
 The Cook yscalded / for al his longe ladel 2020
 ¶ Noght was foryeten / by the Infortune of Marte
 The Cartere / ouer ryden with his Carte
 Vnder the wheel / ful lowe / he lay adoun
 ¶ Ther were also / of Martes diuisioun 2024
 The laborer / and the Bocher and the Smyth
 That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his Styth
 ¶ And al aboute / depeynted in a tour
 Saugh I Conquest' sittynge in greet honour 2028
 With the sharpe sword / ouer his heed
 Hangynge / by a soutil twynes threed
 ¶ Depeynted was / the slaughtre of Iulius
 Of grete Nero / and of Antonius 2032
 Al be þat thilke tyme / they were vnborn

- Yet was hir deth / depeynted ther biforn
 By manasyng of Mars / right by figure
 So was it shewed in that portreiture 2036
 As is depeynted / in the Certres aboue
 Who shal be slayn / or elles deed for loue
 Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde (leaf 20, back)
 I may nat rekene hem alle though I wolde 2040
The Statue of Mars / vp vn a Carte stood
 Armed / and looked grym as he were wood
 And ouer his heed / ther shynen two figures
 Of sterres / that been cleped in scriptures 2044
 That oon Puella / that oother Rubeus
 This god of Armes / was arrayed thus
 A wolf ther stood / biforn hym at his feet
 With eyen rede / and of a man he eet 2048
 With scutil pencil / was depeynted this storie
 In redoutyng / of Mars and of his glorie
Now / to the temple / of Dyane the chaste
 As shortly as I kan I wol me haste 2052
 To telle yow / al the descripsioun
 Depeynted been the walles vp and down
 Of huntyng / and of shamefast chastitee
 ¶ Ther saugh I / how woful Calistopee 2056
 Whan þat Diane / agreued was with here
 Was turned / from a womman to a Bere
 And after was she maad the loode sterre ¶ Vrsa maior
 Thus was it peynted / I kan sey yow no ferre 2060
 Hir sone is eek a sterre as men may see
 ¶ Ther saugh I Dane / yturned til a tree
 I mene nat the goddesse Diane
 But Penneus doughter / which þat highte Dane 2064
 ¶ Ther saugh I Attheon / an hert ymaked
 ffor vengeance / þat he saugh Diane al naked
 I saugh / how þat hise houndes / haue hym caught
 And freeten hym / for þat they knewe hym naught 2068
 ¶ Yet peynted / [was] a litel forther moor

How Atthalante / hunted the wilde boor
 And Meleagree / and many another mo
 for which Dyane / wroghte hym care and wo 2072
 ¶ Ther saugh I / many another wonder storie
 The whiche / me list nat' drawn to memorie
 ¶ This goddesse on an hert' ful wel hye seet'
 With smale houndes / al aboute hir feet' 2076
 And vnder nethe hir feet' she hadde a moone
 Wexynge it was / and sholde wanye soone
 In gaude grene / hir statue clothed was
 With bowe in honde / and Arwes in a cas 2080
 Hir eyen caste she / ful lowe adoun
 Ther Pluto / hath his derke regioun
 ¶ A womman trauaillynge / was hire biforn
 But for hir child / so longe was vnborn 2084
 fful pitously / Lucyna / gan she calle
 And seyde helpe / for thou mayst' best of alle
 Wel koude he peynten lifly / that it wroghte (leaf 27)
 With many a floryn / he the hewes boghte 2088
 N Ow been the lystes maad / and Theseus
 That at his grete cost / arrayed thus
 The temples / and the Theatre euery deel
 Whan it was doon / hym lyked wonder weel 2092
 But stynte I wole / of Theseus a lite
 And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite
 ¶ The day approacheth / of hir retournynge
 That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge 2096
 The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde
 And til Atthenes / hir couenantz for to holde
 Hath euerich of hem / broght' an hundred knyghtes
 Wel armed. for the werre / at alle rightes 2100
 And sikerly / ther trowed many a man
 That neuere sithen / that the world bigan
 As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond'
 As fer / as god hath makid see or lond' 2104
 Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye

ffor euery wight that louede chivalrye
 And wolde his thankes / han a passant name
 Hath preyd / þat he myghte been of that game 2108
 And wel was hym / that ther to chosen was
 ffor if ther fille tomorwe swich a caas
 Ye knowen wel / þat euery lusty knyght
 That loueth paramours / and bath his myght 2112
 Were it in Engelond / or elles where
 They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there
 To fighte for a lady / benedicitee
 It were a lusty sighte / for to see 2116
 ¶ And right so / ferden they with Palamon
 With hym / ther wenten knyghtes many on
 Som wol ben armed in an haubergeon
 And in bristplate / and in a light gypon 2120
 And somme woln haue / a paire plates large
 And somme woln haue / a Puce sheeld / or a targe
 Somme woln ben armed / on hir legges weel
 And haue an Ax / and somme a Mace of steel 2124
 Ther is no newe gyse / that it nas old
 Armed were they / as I haue yow told
 Everych / after his opinioñ
 Ther maistow seen / comynge with Palamon 2128
 Lygurge hym self the grete kyng of Trace
 Blak was his berd / and manly was his face
 The cercles / of hise eyen in his heed
 They gloweden / bitwyxen yelow and reed 2132
 And lik a grifphon / looked he aboute
 With kempe heeris / on hise browes stoute
 Hise lymes grete / hise brawnes harde and stronge (leaf 37, back)
 Hise shuldres brode / hise armes rounde and longe 2136
 And as the gyse was in his contree
 fful hye / vpon a Chaar of gold / stood [he¹] (in a later hand)
 With foure white boles in the trays
 In stede of Cote Armure / ouer his harnays 2140
 With nayles yelewe / and brighte as any gold

62 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

He hadde a Beres skyn / colblak / for old
 His longe heer / was kembd / bihynde his bak
 As any Rauenes fethere / it shoon for blak' 2144
 A wrethe of gold arm greet / of huge wighte
 Vpon his heed / set ful of stones brighte
 Of fyne Rubyes / and of dyamauntz
 Aboute his Chaar / ther wenten white Alauntz 2148
 Twenty and mo / as grete as any steer
 To hunten at the leonⁿ or^l / the deer [1 MS. or / or]
 And folwed hym / with mosel faste ybounde
 Colered of gold / and tourettes fyled rounde 2152
 An hundred lordes / hadde he in his route
 Armed ful wel / with hertes stierne and stoute
 With Arcite / in stories as men fynde
 The grete Emetreus / the kyng of Inde 2156
 Vp on a steede bay / trapped in steel
 Couered in clooth of gold / dyapred weel
 Cam ridynge / lyk the god of Armes Mars
 His Cote Armure / was of clooth of Tars 2160
 Couched with perles / white and rounde and grete
 His sadel / was of brend gold newe ybete
 A Mantel [was] / vp on his shulder hangynge
 Brat ful of Rubyes rede / as fyr sparklynge 2164
 His criske heer / lyk rynges was yronne
 And that was yelow / and glytered as the sonne
 His nose was heigh / hise eyen bright citrynⁿ
 Hise lippes rounde / his colour was sangwyn 2168
 A fewe frakenes / in his face yspreynd
 Bitwixen yelow / and somdel blak ymeynd
 And as a leonⁿ / he his lookyngⁿ caste
 Of fyue and twenty yeer / his age I caste 2172
 His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge
 His voys / was as a trompe thondrynge
 Vp on his heed / he wered of laurer grene
 A gerlandⁿ / fressh / and lusty for to sene 2176
 Vp on his hand / he bar for his deduytⁿ

An Egle tame / as any lilye whyt'
 An hundred lordes / hadde he with hym there
 Al armed saue hir heddes / in al hir gere 2180
 fful richely / in alle maner thynges
 ffor trusteth wel / þat dukes / Erles kynges
 Were gadered / in this noble compaignye [leaf 26]
 ffor loue / and for encrees of chiualrye 2184
 Aboute this kyng' ther ran on euery part'
 fful many a tame leon' / and leopard'
 And in this wise / thise lordes alle and some
 Been on the Sonday to the Citee come 2188
 Aboute pryme / and in the toun alight
 ¶ This Theseus / this duc' this worthy knyght
 Whan he had broght hem / in to his Citee
 And Inned hem / euerich in his degree 2192
 He festeth hem / and dooth so greet labour
 To esen hem / and doon hem al honour
 That yet men weneth / þat no maner wit
 Of noon estaat' ne koude amenden it 2196
 ¶ The Mynstralcye / the seruice / at the feeste
 The grete yiftes / to the meeste and leeste
 The riche array / of Theseus paleys
 Ne who sat' first ne last vp on the deys 2200
 What ladyes fairest been / or best daunsynge
 Or which of hem / kan dauncen best and synge
 Ne who moost felyngly speketh of loue
 What haukes / sitten on the perche aboue 2204
 What houndes / liggen in the floor adoun
 Of al this / make I now no mencion
 But al theeffect' that thynketh me the beste
 Now cometh the point' and herkneth if yow leste 2208
 The sonday nyght' er day bigan to sprynge
 ¶ Whan Palamon / the larke herde synge
 Al though it nere nat day / by houres two
 Yet song the larke / and Palamon also 2212
 With hooly herte / and with an heigh corage

He roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage
 Vn to the blisful Citherea benigne
 I mene Venus / honorable and digne 2216
 And in hir houre / he walketh forth a paas
 Vn to the lystes / ther hire temple was
 And down he kneleth / with ful humble cheer
 And herte soor / and seyde in this manere 2220
 Faireste of faire / o lady myn Venus
 Doughter to Ioue / and spouse of Vulcanus ¶ The preyere
of Palamon.
¶ to Venus
goddesse of loue.
 Thow gladere / of the Mount of Citheron
 ffor thilke loue / thow haddest to Adoon 2224
 Haue pitee / of my bittre teeris smerte
 And taak myn humble preyere at thyn herte
 Allas / I ne haue / no langage to telle
 Theffectes / ne the tormentz of myn helle 2228
 Myn herte / may myne harmes nat biwreys
 I am so confus / that I kan nocht seye
 But mercy lady bright that knowest weele [leaf 28, back]
 My thought and seest what harmes pat I feele 2232
 Considere al this / and rewe vp on my soore
 As wisly / as I shal for eueremoore
 Emforth my myght thy trewe seruant be
 And holden werre / alwey with chastitee 2236
 That make I myn auow / so ye me helpe
 I kepe noghit of Armes for to yelpe
 Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to haue victorie
 Ne renoun in this cas / ne veyne glorie 2240
 Of pris of Armes / blowen vp and down
 But I wolde haue / fully possessioun
 Of Emelye / and dye in thy seruyse
 ffynd thow the manere / hou and in what wyse 2244
 I recche nat / but it may bettre be
 To haue victorie of hem / or they of me
 So that I haue / my lady in myne Armes
 ffor though so be / that Mars is god of Armes 2248
 Yourte vertu is so greet in heuene aboue

That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue
 ¶ Thy temple wol I worshiþe eueremo
 And on thyn Auter / where I ride or go 2252
 I wol doon sacrifice / and fires beete
 And if ye wol nat so / my lady sweete
 Thanne preye I thee / tomorwe / with a spere
 That Arcita / me thurgh the herte bere 2256
 Thanne rekke I noght / whan I haue lost my lyf
 Though that Arcita / wyne hire to his wyf
 This is the effect and ende of my preyere
 Yif me my loue / thow blisful lady deere 2260
 ¶ When the orison / was doon of Palamon
 His sacrifice he dide / and that anon
 fful pitously / with alle circumstaunce
 Al telle I noght as now / his obseruaunce 2264
 But atte laste / the statue of Venus shook /
 And made a signe / wher by þat he took
 That his preyere / accepted was that day
 ffor thogh the signe / shewed a delay 2268
 Yet wiste he wel / þat graunted was his boone
 And with glad herte / he wente hym hoom ful soone
 The thridde houre in-equal that Palamon
 T Bigan / to Venus temple for to gon 2272
 Vp roos the sonne / and vp roos Emelye
 And to the temple of Dyane gan hye
 Hir maydens / þat she thider with hire ladde
 fful redily / with hem the fyr they ladde 2276
 Thencens / the clothes / and the remenant al
 That to the sacrifice / longen shal
 The hornes fulle of Meeth / as was the gyse (leaf 29)
 Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificise 2280
 ¶ Smokyng the temple / ful of clothes faire
 This Emelye / with herte debonaire
 Hir body wessh / with water of a welle
 But hou she dide hir ryte / I dar nat telle 2284
 But it be / any thing in general

And yet it were a game / to heeren al
 To hym þat meneth wel / it were no charge
 But it is good / a man been at his large 2288
 ¶ Hir brighte heer was kempd vntressed al
 A coroune / of a grene ook / cerial
 Vp on hir heed was set ful fair and meete
 Two fyres / on the auter / gan she beete 2292
 And dide hir thynges / as men may biholde
 In Stace of Thebes / and thise bookes olde
 Whan kyndled was the fyr / with pitous cheere
 Vn to Dyane / she spak as ye may heere 2296
 O chaste goddesse / of the wodes grene ¶ The preyere
 To whom bothe heuene *and* erthe *and* see is sene of Emelye / to
 Queene of the regne of Pluto derk / and lowe dyane goddesse
 Goddesse of maydens / that myn herte hast knowe of Maydens. 2300
 ful many a yeer / and woost what I desire
 As keepe me / fro thy vengeance and thyn Ire
 That Attheon / aboughte cruelly
 Chaste goddesse / wel wostow þat I 2304
 Desire / to ben a mayden al my lyf
 Ne neuere wol I be no loue ne wyf
 I am thow woost yet of thy compaignye
 A mayde / and loue huntynge and venerye 2308
 And for to walken / in the wodes wilde
 And noght to ben a wyf / and be with childe
 Noght wol I knowe / the compaignye of man
 Now helpe me lady / sith ye may and kan 2312
 ffor tho thre formes / þat thou hast in thee
 And Palamon / that hath swich loue to me
 And eek Arcite / that loueth me so soore
 This grace I preye thee with oute moore 2316
 And sende loue and pees / bitwixe hem two
 And fro me / turne away hir hertes so
 That al hire hote loue / and hir desir
 And al hir bisy torment and hir fir 2320
 Be queynt or turned / in another place

And if so be / thou wolt do me no grace
 And if my destyne / be shapen so
 That I shal nedes haue oon of hem two 2324
 As sende me hym / þat moost desireth me
 Bihoold goddesse / of clene chastitee
 The bittre teeris / that on my chekes falle [leaf 29, back]
 Syn thou art mayde / and kepere of vs alle 2328
 My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserue
 And whil I lyue / a mayde I wol thee serue
 ¶ The fires brenne / vp on the Auter cleere
 Whil Emelye / was thus in hir preyere 2332
 But sodeynly / she saugh a sighte queynte
 ffor right anon / oon of the fyres queynte
 And quyked agayn / and after that anon
 That oother fyr was queynt and al agon 2336
 And as it queynte / it made a whistlynge
 As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennynge
 And at the brondes ende / out ran anon
 As it were / bloody dropes many oon 2340
 ffor which / so soore agast was Emelye
 That she was wel ny mad and gan to crye
 ffor she ne wiste / what it signyfyed
 But oonly for the feere / thus hath she cried 2344
 And weepe / that it was pitee for to heere
 And ther with al / Dyane gan appeere
 With bowe in honde / right as an hunteresse
 And seyde doghter / stynt thyn heynesse 2348
 Among the goddes hye / it is affermed ¶ The answer
 And by eterne word / writen and confermed ¶ of Dyane
 ¶ to Emelye.
 Thou shalt ben wedded vn to oon of tho
 That han for thee / so muchel care and wo 2352
 But vn to which of hem / I may nat telle
 ffarwel / for I ne may no lenger dwelle
 The fires / whiche that on myn Auter brenne
 Shulle thee declare / er that thou go henne 2356
 Thyn auenture of loue / as in this cas

And with that word / the Arwes in the Caas
 Of the goddesse / clateren faste and ryng
 And forth she wente / and made a vanysshynge 2360
 ffor which / this Emelye / astoned was
 And seyde / what amounteth this Allas
 I putte me / in thy proteccioñ
 Dyane / and in thy disposicioñ 2364
 And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye
 This is theeffect ther is namoore to seye
 The nexte houre of Mars folwyng this
 Arcite / vn to the temple walked is 2368
 Of fierse Mars / to doon his sacrificise
 With alle the rytes / of his payen wyse
 With pitous herte / and heigh deuocioñ
 Right thus to Mars / he seyde his orisoñ 2372
 O stronge god / that in the regnes colde ¶ The orisoñ of
 Of Trace / honoured art and lord yholde ¶ Arcite
 ¶ And hast in euery regne / and euery lond ¶ to Mars god
 Of armes / al the brydel in thyn hond ¶ of Armes
 And hem fortunest as thee lyst deuyse (leaf 30)
 Accepte of me / my pitous sacrificise
 If so be that my youthe may deserue
 And þat my myght be worthy for to serue 2380
 Thy godhede / þat I may been oon of thyne
 Thanne preye I thee / to rewe vp on my pyne
 ffor thilke peyne / and thilke hoothe fir
 In which / thou whilom brendest for desir 2384
 Whan þat thou vsedest the beautee
 Of faire yonge / fresshe Venus free
 And haddest hire / in armes at thy wille
 Al though thee ones / on a tyme mysfille 2388
 Whan Vulcanus / hadde caught thee in his las
 And foond thee liggynge / by his wyf allas
 ffor thilke sorwe / that was in thyn herte
 Haue routhe as wel / vp on my peynes smerte 2392
 I am yong and vnkonnynge as thou woost

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 69

And as I trowe / with loue offended moost
 That euere was / any lyues creature
 ffor she / pat dooth me / al this wo endure 2396
 Ne reccheth neuere / wher I synke or fleete
 And wel I woot' er she me mercy heete
 I moot with strengthe / wyne hire in the place
 And wel I woot' withouten helpe or grace 2400
 Of thee / ne may my strengthe noght auaille
 Thanne helpe me lord / tomorwe in my bataille
 For thilke fyr / that whilom brente thee
 As wel / as thilke fyr / now brenneth me 2404
 And do / that I tomorwe haue victorie
 Myn be the trauaille / and thyn be the glorie
 Thy souereyn temple / wol I moost honouren
 Of any place / and alwey moost labouren 2408
 In thy plesaunce / and in thy craftes stronge
 And in thy temple / I wol my baner honge
 And alle the Armes of my compaignye
 And euere mo / vn to that day I dye 2412
 Eterne fir / I wol biforn thee fynde
 And eek' to this auow / I wol me bynde
 My beerd / myn heer / that hongeth long adoun
 That neuere yet / ne felte offensioun 2416
 Of rasour / nor of shere / I wol thee yeue
 And ben thy trewe seruant' whil I lyue
 Now lord haue routhe vp on my sorwes soore
 Yif me the victorie / I aske thee namoore 2420
The preyere stynt' of Arcita the stronge
 The rynges / on the temple dore that honge
 And eek' the dores / clatereden ful faste (leaf 90, back)
 Of which Arcita / som what hym agaste 2424
 The fyres brenden / vp on the Auter brighte
 That it gan / al the temple for to lighte
 And sweete smel / the ground anon vp yaf
 And Arcita / anon his hand vp haf 2428
 And moore encens / in to the fyr he caste

70 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

With othere rytes mo / and atte last
 The Statue of Mars / bigan his hauberk ryng
 And *with* that soun / he herde a *murmuryng* 2432
 fful lowe and dym / and seyde thus / Victorie
 ffor which / he yaf to Mars / honour and glorie
 And thus with ioie / and hope wel to fare
 Arcite anon / vn to his In is fare 2436
 As fayn as fowel / is of the brighte sonne
 ¶ And right anon / swich strif / ther is bigonne
 For thilke grauntyng in the heuene aboue
 Bitwixe Venus / the goddessse of love 2440
 And Mars / the stierne god Armypotente
 That Iuppiter / was bisy it to stente
 Til that the pale / Saturnus the colde
 That knew so manye / of auentures olde 2444
 ffoond / in his olde experience and art
 That he ful soone / hath plesed euery part
 As sooth is seyde / elde hath greet auantage
 In elde / is bothe wysdom and vsage 2448
 Men may the olde at renne / and noght at rede
 Saturne anon / to stynten strif and drede
 Al be it that it is / agayn his kynde
 Of al this strif / he gan remedie fynde 2452
 ¶ My deere doghter Venus / quod Saturne
 My cours / that hath so wyde for to turne
 Hath moore power / than woot any man
 Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan 2456
 Myn is the prison / in the derke cote
 Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte
 The *murmure* and the cherles rebellyng
 The groynyng / and the pryuee empoysonyng 2460
 I do vengeance / and pleyn correccioñ
 Whil[es] I dwelle / in signe of the leon
 Myn is the ruyne / of the hye halles
 The fallyng / of the toures / and of the walles 2464
 Vp on the Mynour / or the Carpenter

I slow Sampson / shakynge the piler
 And myne be / the maladyes colde
 The derke tresons / and the castes olde 2468
 My lookyng' is the fader of pestilence
 Now weepe namoore / I shal doon diligence
 That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght' [leaf 51] 2472
 Shal haue his lady / as thou hast him hight'
 Though Mars shal helpe his knyght' yet nathelees
 Bitwixe yow / ther moot be som tyme pees
 Al be ye noght' of o compleccion
 That causeth al day swich diuision 2476
 I am thyn Aiel / redy at thy wille
 Weepe now namoore / I wol thy lust fulfille
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of the goddes above
 Of Mars / and of Venus goddesses of love 2480
 And telle yow / as pleyndly as I kan
 The grete effect' for which that I bygan

¶ Explicit' tercia pars

¶ Sequitur pars quarta

Greet was the feeste / in Atthenes that day
 And eek / the lusty seson of that May 2484
 Made euery wight' / to been in such plesaunce
 That al that Monday / lusten they and daunce
 And spenten it' in Venus heigh seruyse
 But by the cause / that they sholde ryse 2488
 Eerly / for to seen the grete fight
 Vn to hir reste / wenten they at nyght'
 And on the morwe / whan þat day gan sprynge
 Of hors and harneys / noyse and claterynge 2492
 Ther was in the hostelryes al aboute
 And to the paleys / rood ther many a route
 Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys
 Ther maystow seen diuysynge of harneys 2496
 So vnkouth and so riche / and wroght so weel
 Of goldsmythrye / of browdynge / and of steel

72 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

The sheeldes brighte / testeres / and trappures
 Gold hewen helmes / hauberkes / Cote Armures 2500
 Lordes in paramenz / on hir courseres
 Knyghtes of retenue / and eek Squieres
 Nailynge the speres / and helmes bokelynge
 Giggyng of sheeldes / with layneres lacyng 2504
 There as nede is / they weren no thyng ydel
 The fomy steedes / on the golden brydel
 Gnawynge / and faste the Armurers also
 With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro 2508
 Yemen on foyte / and communes many oon
 With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon
 Pypes / trompes / Nakerers / Clariounes
 That in the bataille / blowen bloody sounes 2512
 The paleys / ful of peples vp and down [leaf 31, back]
 Heere thre / ther ten / holdynge hir question
 Dyuyng / of thise Thebane knyghtes two
 Somme seyden thus / somme seyde it shal be so 2516
 Somme helden with hym / with the blake berð
 Somme with the balled / somme with the thikke herd
 Somme seyde / he looked grymme / and he wolde fighte
 He hath a sparth / of twenty pound of wighte 2520
 Thus was the halle / ful of diuynynge
 Longe after / that the sonne gan to sprynge
 The grete Theseus / that of his sleepe awaked
 With Mynstralcie / and noyse þat was maked 2524
 Heeld yet the chambre / of his Paleys riche
 Til that the Thebane knyghtes / bothe yliche
 Honored / were / in to the paleys fet
 Duc Theseus / was at a wyndow set 2528
 Arrayed / right as he were a god in Trone
 The peple / preesseth thiderward ful soone
 Hym for to seen / and doon heigh reuerence
 And eek to herkne / his heste and his sentence 2532
 ¶ An heraud on a Scaffold made an Oo
 Til al the noyse of peple was ydo

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 73

And whan he saugh / the noyse of peple al stille
 Tho shewed he / the myghty dukes wille 2536
 ¶ The lord / hath of his heih discrecion
 Considered / that it were destruccion
 To gentil blood / to fighten in the gyse
 Of mortal bataille / now in this emprise 2540
 Wherfore / to shapen / þat they shal nat dye
 He wolde / his firste purpos modifie
 ¶ No man ther fore vp payne of los of lyf
 No maner shot polax ne short[e] knyf 2544
 In to the lystes sende / ne thider brynge
 Ne short swerd for to stoke / with poynt bitynge
 No man ne drawe / ne bere by his syde
 Ne no man shal / vn to his felawe ryde 2548
 But o cours / with a sharpe ygrounde spere
 ffoyne if hym list on foote / hym self to were
 And he / that is at meschief shal be take
 And noght slayn / but be broght vn to the stake 2552
 That shal ben ordeyned / on either syde
 But thider he shal by force / and there abyde
 ¶ And if so be / the 'chieftayn be take [1 chi-ef]
 On outhur syde / or elles sleen his make 2556
 No lenger shal the turneiynge laste
 God spede you / gooth forth / and ley on faste
 With long swerd / and with Maces / fighteth youre fille
 Gooth now youre wey / this is the lordes will 2560
 The voys of peple / touched the heuene [leaf 32]
 So loude cride they / with murie steuene
 God saue swich a lord / that is so good
 He wilneth no destruccion of blood 2564
 Vp goon the trompes / and the melodye
 And to the lystes / rit the compaignye
 By ordinance / thurgh out the Citee large
 Hanged with clooth of gold and nat with sarge 2568
 ¶ fful lik a lord / this noble duc gan ryde
 Thise two Thebans / vp on either side

74 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

And after rood / the queene and Emelye
 And after that another compaignye 2572
 Of oon and oother / after hir degre
 And thus they passen / thurgh out the Citee
 And to the lystes / come they by tyme
 It nas not of the day / yet fully pryme 2576
 Whan set was Theseus / ful riche and hye
 Ypolita the queene and Emelye
 And othere ladys / in degrees aboute
 Vn to the seettes preesseth al the route 2580
 And westward / thurgh the gates vnder Marte
 Arcite / and eek the hondred of his parte
 With baner reed / is entred right anon
 ¶ And in that selue moment Palamon 2584
 Is vnder Venus / Estward in the place
 With Baner whyt / and hardy chiere *and* face
 In al the world / to seken vp and down
 So euene / with outen variacioun 2588
 Ther nere / swiche compaignyes tweye
 ffor ther was noon so wys þat koude seye
 That any hadde / of oother auauntage
 Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age 2592
 So euene were [they] chosen / for to gesse
 And in two renges / faire they hem dresse
 ¶ Whan þat hir names / rad were euerichon
 That in hir nombre / gyle were ther noon 2596
 Tho were the gates shet and cried was loude
 Do now youre deuoir / yonge knyghtes proude
 ¶ The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng vp and down
 Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun 2600
 Ther is namoore to seyn / but west and Est
 In goon the speres / ful sadly in arrest
 In gooth the sharpe spore / in to the syde
 Ther seen men / who kan Iuste *and* who kan ryde 2604
 Ther shyueren shaftes / vp on sheeldes thikke
 He feeleth / thurgh the herte spoon the prikke

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 75

Vp spryngen speres / twenty foot on highte
 Out gooth the swerdes / as the siluer brighte 2608
 The helmes they tohewen / and toshrede [leaf 32, back]
 Out brest the blood / with stierne stremes rede
 With myghty maces / the bones they tobreste
 He thurgh the thikkeste / of the throng gan threste 2612
 Ther semblen steedes stronge / and doun gooth al
 He rolleth vnder foot as dooth a bal
 He foyneth on his feet with his tronchon
 And he hym hurtleth / with his hors adoun 2616
 He thurgh the body is hurt and sithen ytake
 Maugree his heed / and broght vn to the stake
 As forward was right ther he moste abyde
 Another lad is / on that oother syde 2620
 ¶ And som tyme / dooth hem Theseus to reste
 Hem to fresshen / and drynken if hem leste
 fful ofte a day / han thise Thebanes two
 Togydre ymet and wroght his felawe wo 2624
 Vnhorsed hath / ech oother of hem tweye
 Ther nas no Tygre in the vale of Galgopheye
 Whan þat hir whelpes is stole / whan it is lite
 So crueel on the hunte / as is Arcite 2628
 ffor Ielous herte / vpon this Palamon
 Ne in Belmarye / ther nys so fel leon
 That hunted is / or for his hunger wood
 Ne of his praye / desireth so the blood 2632
 As Palamon / to sleen his foo Arcite
 The Ielous strokes / on hir helmes byte
 Out renneth blood / on bothe hir sydes rede
 ¶ Som tyme an ende / ther is of euery dede 2636
 ffor er the sonne / vn to the reste wente
 The stronge kyng Emetreus / gan hente
 This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite
 And made his swerd / depe in his flesshe to byte 2640
 And by the force of twenty / is he take
 Vnyolden / and ydrawe vnto the stake

And in the rescus / of this Palamon
 The stronge kyng' lygurge / is born adoun 2644
 And kyng' Emetreus / for al his strengthe
 Is born out of his sadel / a swerdes lengthe
 So hitte him Palamon er he were take
 But al for noght' / he was broght' to the stake 2648
 His hardy herte / myghte hym helpe naught'
 He moste abyde / whan that he was caught'
 By force / and eek by composicioñ
 ¶ Who sorweth now / but woful Palamon 2652
 That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighte
 And whan þat Theseus / hadde seyn this sighte
 Vn to the folk / þat foghten thus echon
 He cryde / hoo namoore / for it is doon 2656
 ¶ I wol be trewe Iuge / and no partie [leaf 22]
 Arcite of Thebes / shal haue Emelie
 That by his fortune / hath hire faire ywonne
 Anon / ther is a noyse of peple bigonne 2660
 ffor Ioye of this / so loude and heighe with alle
 It semed / that the lystes sholde falle
 What kan now faire venus doon aboue
 What seith she now / what dooth this queene of loue
 But wepeth so / for wantynge of hir wille
 Til that hir teeres / in the lystes fille
 She seyde / I am ashamed doutelees
 ¶ Saturnus seyde / doghter hoold thy pees 2668
 Mars hath his wille / his knyght' hath al his boone
 And by myn heed / thou shalt been esed soone
 The trompes / with the loude Mynstralcie
 The heraudes / that ful loude yolle and crie 2672
 Been in hire wele / for Ioye of Daun Arcite
 But herkneth me / and stynteth now a lite
 Which a myracle / ther bifel anon
 ¶ This fierse Arcite / hath of his helm ydon 2676
 And on a Courser / for to shewe his face
 He priketh endelong' the large place

GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 77

Lokyng vpward vp on Emelye
 And she agayn / hym caste a freendlich eye 2680
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 And was al his [in] chiere / as in his herte
 ¶ Out of the ground / a furie Infernal sterte 2684
 ffrom Pluto sent at requeste of Saturne
 ffor which his hors / for fere gan to turne
 And leepe aside / and foundred as he leepe
 And er that Arcite / may taken keepe 2688
 He pighte hym / on the pomel of his heed ¶ *Nota periculum.*
 That in the place he lay / as he were deed
 His brest tobrosten / with his sadel bowe
 As blak he lay / as any cole or crowe 2692
 So was the blood / yronnen in his face
 Anon he was / yborn out of the place
 With herte soor / to Theseus paleys
 Tho was he koruen / out of his harneys 2696
 And in a bed ybrought / ful faire and blyve
 ffor he was yet in memorie / and alyue
 And alwey / cryng after Emelye
 ¶ Duc Theseus / with al his compaignye 2700
 Is comen hoom / to Atthenes his Citee
 With alle blisse / and greet solempnitee
 Al be it that this Auenture was falle
 He nolde noght disconforten hem alle 2704
 Men seyde eek that Arcite shal nat dye
 He shal been heeled / of his maladye
 ¶ And of another thyng / they weren as fayn [leaf 33, back]
 That of hem alle / was ther noon yslayn 2708
 Al were they soore yhurt and namely oon
 That with a spere / was thirled his brest boon
 To othere woundes / and to broken armes
 Somme hadden salues / and somme hadden charmes 2712
 fermacies of herbes / and eek saue
 They dronken / for they wolde hir lymes haue

78 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

ffor which this noble duc as he wel kan
 Conforteth / and honoureth euery man 2716
 And made reuel / al the longe nyght
 Vn to the straunge lordes / as was right
 Ne ther was holden / no disconfitynge
 But as a Iustes / or a tourneyng 2720
 ffor soothly / ther was no disconfiture
 ffor fallyng / nys nat but an Auenture
 Ne to be lad by force / vn to the stake
 Vnyolden / and with twenty knyghtes take 2724
 O persone allone with outen mo
 And haryed forth / by Arm[e] / foot and too
 And eke his steede / dryuen forth with staues
 With footmen / bothe yemen and eek knaues 2728
 It nas aretted hym no vileynye
 Ther may no man / clepen it cowardye
 ¶ ffor which anon / duc Theseus leet crye
 To stynten / alle rancour and enuye 2732
 The gree / as wel of o syde as of oother
 And eyther syde ylik as ootheres brother
 And yaf hem yiftes / after hir degree
 And fully / heeld a feeste / dayes three 2736
 And conuoyed / the kynges worthily
 Out of his toun / a Iournee largely
 And hoom wente euery man the righte way
 Ther was namoore / but fare wel / haue good day 2740
 Of this bataille / I wol namoore endite
 But speke of Palamon and of Arcyte
 Swelleth the brest of arcite / and the soore
 Encreesseth at his herte / moore and moore 2744
 The clothered blood / for any lechecraft
 Corrupteth / and is in his bouk ylaft
 That neither veyne blood / ne ventusynge
 Ne drynke of herbes / may ben his helpynge 2748
 The vertu expulsif / or Animal
 ffro thilke vertu / cleped natural

Ne may the venym / voyden ne expelle
 The pipes of his longes / gonne to swelle 2752
 And euery lacerte / in his brest adoun
 Is shent with venym and corrupcioñ
 Hym gayneth neither for to gete his lif [leaf 34]
 Vomyt vpward / ne downward laxatif 2756
 Al is tobrosten / thilke Regioun
 Nature hath now / no dominacioun
 And certainly / ther Nature wol nat wirche
 ffare wel Phisik go ber the man to chirche 2760
 This al and som / that Arcita moot dye
 ffor which / he sendeth / after Emelye
 And Palamon / that was his cosyn deere
 Thanne seyde he thus / as ye shal after heere 2764
 ¶ Naught may / the woful spirit in myn herte
 Declare o point of alle my sorwes smerte
 To yow my lady / that I loue moost
 But I biquethe / the seruyce of my goost 2768
 To yow / abouen euery creature
 Syn þat my lyf / [it] may no lenger dure
 Allas the wo / allas the peynes stronge
 That I for yow haue suffred / and so longe 2772
 Allas the deeth / allas myn Emelye
 Allas / departynge of our compaignye
 Allas myn hertes queene / allas my wyf
 Myn hertes lady / endere of my lyf/ 2776
 What is this world / what asketh men to haue
 Now with his loue / now in his colde graue
 Allone / with outen any compaignye
 ffare wel / my swete foo / myn Emelye 2780
 And softe taak me / in youre Armes tweye
 ffor loue of god / and herkneth what I seye
 I haue heer / with my cosyn Palamon
 Had strif and rancour/ many a day agon 2784
 ffor loue of yow / and for my Ialousye
 And Iuppiter / so wys my soule gye

To spoken / of a seruañt proprely
 With alle circumstances trewely 2788
 That is to seyn / trouthe / honour knyghthede
 Wysdom / humblesse / estaat and heigh kynrede
 ffredom / and al that longeth to that Art
 So Iuppiter / haue of my soule part 2792
 As in this world / right now ne knowe I non
 So worthy to ben loued as Palamon
 That serueth yow / and wol doon al his lyf
 And if that euere / ye shul ben a wyf 2796
 floryet nat Palamon / the gentil man
 And with that word / his speche faille gan
 And from his herte / vp to his brest was come
 The coold of deeth / that hadde hym ouercome 2800
 And yet moore ouer / for in hise Armes two
 The vital strengthe is lost / and al ago
 Only / the intellect with outen moore [leaf 24, back]
 That dwelled in his herte / syk and soore 2804
 Gan faillen / when the herte felte deeth
 Dusked hise eyen two / and failed breeth
 But on his lady yet caste he his eye
 His laste word / was mercy Emelye 2808
 His spirit chaunged hous / and wente ther
 As I cam neuere / I kan nat tellen wher
 Therefore I stynte / I nam no diuinistre
 Of soules / fynde I nat in this Registre 2812
 Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle
 Of hem / though þat they writen wher they dwelle
 Arcite is coold / ther Mars his soule gye
 Now wol I speken forth of Emelye 2816
 Shrighte Emelye / and howleth Palamon
 And Theseus / his suster took anon
 Swownynge / and baar hire fro the corps away
 What helpeth it to tarien forth the day 2820
 To tellen how she weepe / bothe eue and morwe
 ffor in swich cas / wommen haue swich sorwe

Whan þat hir housbond / is from hem ago
 That for the moore part they sorwen so 2824
 Or ellis / fallen in swich maladye
 That at the laste / certainly they dye
 ¶ Infinite / been the sorwes and the teeres
 Of olde folk / and eek of tendre yeeres 2828
 In al the toun / for deeth of this Theban
 for hym ther wepeth / bothe child and man
 So greet a wepyng was ther noon certayn
 Whan Ector was ybrought / al fressh yslayn 2832
 To Troye / alas the pitee þat was ther
 Cracchyng of chekes / rentyng eek of heer
 Why woldestow be deed / thise wommen crye
 And haddest gold ynough / and Emelye 2836
 ¶ No man / myghte gladen Theseus
 Sauynge / his olde fader Egeus
 That knew / this worldes transmutacion
 As he hadde / seyn it / vp and down 2840
 Joye after wo / and wo after gladnesse
 And shewed / hem ensamples and liknesse
 Right as ther / dyed neuere man quod he ¶ Argumentum
 That he ne lyuede in erthe / in som degree 2844
 Right so / ther lyuede neuer man he seyde
 In al this world / þat som tyme he ne deyde
 This world / nys but a thurghfare ful of wo
 And we been pilgrymes / passyng to and fro 2848
 Deeth is an ende / of euery worldes soore
 And ouer al this / yet seyde he muchel moore
 To this effect ful wisely / to enhorten (leaf 35)
 The peple / that they sholde hem reconforte 2852
 Duc Theseus / with al his bisy cure
 Cast now / wher that the sepulture
 Of goode Arcite / may best ynakid be
 And eek moost honorable in his degree 2856
 And at the laste / he took conclusion
 That ther as first Arcite and Palamon

Ne how the ground / agast was of the light
 That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright 2932
 Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree
 And thanne with drye stokkes / clouen a thre
 And thanne with grene wode and spicerye
 And thanne with clooth of gold / and with perrye 2936
 And gerlandes / hangynge / with ful many a flour
 The Mirre / thencens / with al so greet odour
 Ne how Arcite / lay among al this
 Ne what richesse / aboute his body is 2940
 Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse
 Putte in the fyr / of funeral seruyse
 Ne how she swowned / whan men made fyr
 Ne what she spak ne what was hir desire 2944
 Ne what Ieweles / men in the fyre caste
 Whan þat the fyr was greet and brente faste
 ¶ Ne how somme caste hir sheeld / and somme hir spere (1755)
 And of hire vestimentz / whiche þat they were 2948
 And coppes full of wyn / and Milk and blood
 In to the fyr / that brente / as it were wood
 Ne how the grekes / with an huge route
 Tries riden / al the place aboute 2952
 Vp on the left hand / with a loud shoutynge
 And thries / with hir speres claterynge
 And thries / how the ladyes gonne crye
 And how / þat lad was homward Emelye 2956
 Ne how Arcite / is brent to asshen colde
 Ne / how that lych wake / was yholde
 Al thilke nyght / ne how the grekes pleye
 The wake pleyes / ne kepe I nat to seye 2960
 Who wrastleth best naked / with oille enoynt
 Ne who that baar hym best in no disioynt
 ¶ I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
 Hoom til Atthenes / whan the play is doon 2964
 But shortly to the point thanne wol I wende
 And maken / of my longe tale an ende

By processe / and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
 Al styntyd is / the moornyng and the teres 2968
 Of grekes / by oon general assent
 Thanne serued me / ther was a parlement
 At Atthenes / vpon certein poyntz and caas
 Among the whiche poyntz / yspoken was 2972
 To haue with certein contrees alliañce
 And haue fully of Thebans obeissañce
 ffor which / this noble Theseus anon
 Loet senden / after gentil Palamon 2976
 Vnwist of hym / what was the cause and why
 But in hise blake clothes / sorwefully
 He cam / at his comandement in hie
 Tho sente / Theseus for Emelye 2980
 Whan they were set and hust was al the place
 And Thesens / abiden hadde a space
 Er any word / cam fram his wise brest
 Hise eyen sette he / ther as was his lest 2984
 And with a sad visage / he siked stille
 And after that right thus he seyde his wille
 The firste moeuere of the cause aboue
 T Whan he first made / the faire cheyne of loue 2988
 Greet was theeffect and heigh was his entente
 Wel wiste he why / and what ther of he mente
 ffor with that faire cheyne of loue he bond
 The fyr / the eyr / the water and the lond 2992
 In certeyn boundes / that they may nat flee
 That same prince / and that same moeuere quod he
 Hath stablissed / in this wrecched world adoun (leaf 86, back)
 Certeyne dayes / and duracioun 2996
 To al / that is engendrid in this place
 Ouer the which[e] day / they may nat pace
 Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge
 Ther nedeth noght noon Auctoritee allegge 3000
 ffor it is preued / by experience
 But that me list declaren my sentence

Thanne may men / by this ordre wel discernen
 That thilke moeuere / stable is and eterne 3004
 Wel may men knowe / but it be a fool
 That euery part' dirryueth from his hool
 ffor nature / hath taken his bigynnyng'
 Of no partie / or of cantel of a thyng' 3008
 But of a thyng' that parfit is and stable
 Descendynge so / til it be corruptable
 And therfore / of his wise purueiaunce
 He hath / so wel biset' his ordinaunce 3012
 That spesces of thynges / and progressionis
 Shullen enduren / by successionis
 And nat eterne / with outen any lye
 This maystow vnderstonde / and seen it eye 3016
 Loo the ook / þat hath so long' a norissahynge ¶ Exemplum
 ffrom tyme / þat it first' bigynneth sprynge
 And hath so long a lif / as we may see
 Yet at the laste / wasted is the tree 3020
 ¶ Considereth eek' how that the harde stoon ¶ Exemplum
 Vnder oure feet' on which we trede and goon
 Yit wasteth it' as it lyth by the weye
 The brode Ryuer / somtyme wexeth dreye 3024
 The grete toures / se we wane and wende
 Thanne may ye se / þat al this thyng' hath ende
 ¶ Of man and womman / seen we wel also
 That nedeth / in oon of thise termes two 3028
 This is to seyn / in youthe / or elles age
 He moot be deed / the kyng' as shal a page
 Som in his bed / som in the depe see
 Som in the large feeld / as men may se 3032
 Ther helpeth noght' al goth that ilke weye
 Thanne may I seyn¹ / al this thyng' moot deye [se-yn]
 ¶ What maketh this / but Iuppiter the kyng'
 That is prince / and cause of alle thyng' 3036
 Conuertynge al / vn to his propre welle
 ffrom which it is dirryued / sooth to telle

And here agayns / no creature on lyue
 Of no degree / auailleth for to stryue 3040
 ¶ Thanne is it wysdom / as it thynketh me
 To maken vertu of necessitee
 ¶ And take it weel / that we may nat eschue [leaf 87]
 And namely / that to vs alle is due 3044
 And who so gruccheth ought he dooth folye
 And rebel is / to hym that al may gye
 And certainly / a man hath moost honour
 To dyen / in his excellence and flour 3048
 Whan he is siker / of his goode name
 Thanne hath he doon / his freend ne hym no shame
 And gladder / oghte his freend been of his deeth
 Whan with honour / vp yolden is his breeth 3052
 Than whan his name / apalled is for age
 ffor al forgeten / is his vassellage
 Thanne is it best as for a worthy fame
 To dyen / whan þat he is best of name 3056
 ¶ The contrarie of al this / is wilfulnesse
 Why grucchen we / why haue we heynnesse
 That goode Arcite / of Chiualrie flour
 Departed is / with duetee and honour 3060
 Out of this foule prison of this lyf
 Why grucchen heere / his cosyn and his wyf
 Of his wel fare / that loued hem so weel
 Kan he hem thank ? nay god woot neuer a deel 3064
 That bothe his soule / and eek hem self offende
 And yet they mowe / hir lustes nat amende
 What may I concluden / of this longe serye
 But after wo / I rede vs to be merye 3068
 And thanken Iuppiter / of al his grace
 And er that we / departen from this place
 I rede [that] we make / of sorwes two
 O parfit ioye / lastynge eueremo 3072
 And looketh now / wher moost sorwe is her Inne
 Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne

Suster quod he / this is my fulle assent'
 With all thavys / heere of my parlement' 3076
 That gentil Palamon / thyn owene knyght
 That serueth yow / with wille / herte / and myght
 And euere hath doon / syn þat ye first hym knewe
 That ye shul of your grace / vp on hym rewe 3080
 And taken hym / for housbonde and for lord
 Leue! me youre hond / for this is oure accord' [or Lene]
 Lat so now / of youre wommanly pitee
 He is a kynges brother sone pardee 3084
 And though he were / a poure bacheler
 Syn he hath serued yow / so many a yeer
 And had for yow / so greet Aduersitee
 It moste been considered / leeueth me 3088
 ffor gentil mercy / oghte to passen right'
 ¶ Thanne seyde he thus / to Palamon ful right'
 I trowe / ther nedeth litel sermonyng' [leaf 27, back]
 To make yow / assente to this thyng' 3092
 Com neer / and taak youre lady by the hond
 Bitwixen hem / was maad anon the bond
 That highte matrimoigne / or mariage
 By al the conseil / and the Baronage 3096
 ¶ And thus / with alle blisse and melodye
 Hath Palamon / ywedded Emelye
 And god / þat al this wyde world hath wrought'
 Sende hym his loue / that it deere aboght' 3100
 ffor now is Palamon / in alle wele
 Lyuyng in blisse / in richesse and in heele
 And Emelye / hym loueth so tendrely
 And he hire / serueth so gentilly 3104
 That neuere / was ther no word hem bitwene
 Of Ialousie / or any oother tene
 Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye
 And God saue / al this faire compaignye Amen 3108
 ¶ Heere is ended the knyghtes tale ♀

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SECOND SERIES.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1868 is,

1. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part I. This work includes an amalgamation of Prof. F. J. Child's two Papers on the use of the final *-e* by Chaucer (in T. Wright's ed. of *The Canterbury Tales*) and by Gower (in Dr Pauli's ed. of the *Confessio Amantis*).

2. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part I.: 1. Prof. Ebert's Review of Sandras's *Etude sur Chaucer*, translated by J. W. van Rees Hoets, M.A.; 2. A 13th-century Latin Treatise on the *Chilindre* (of the *Shipman's Tale*), edited by Mr E. Brock.

3. A Temporary Preface to the Society's Six-Text edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part I, attempting to show the right Order of the Tales, and the Days and Stages of the Pilgrimage, &c. &c., by F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1869 is,

4. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part II.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1870 is,

5. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part III.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1871 is,

6. Trial-Forewords to my Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Minor Poems* for the Chaucer Society (with a try to set Chaucer's Works in their right order of Time), by Fredk. J. Furnivall. Part I. (This Part brings-out, for the first time, Chaucer's long early but hopeless love.)

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9. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part II.: 3. John of Hoveden's *Practica Chilindri*, edited from the MS, with a translation, by Mr E. Brock. 4. Chaucer's use of the final *-e*, by Joseph Payne, Esq. 5. Mrs E. Barrett-Browning on Chaucer: being those parts of her review of the *Book of the Poets*, 1842, which relate to him; here reprinted by leave of Mr Robert Browning. 6. Professor Bernhard Ten-Brink's critical edition of Chaucer's *Compleinte to Pite*.

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12. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part I. The Robberies of Chaucer by Richard Brey and others at Westminster, and at Hatcham, Surrey, on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 11 with some Account of the Robbers, from the Enrolments in the Public Record Office by Walford D. Selby, Esq., of the Public Record Office.

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Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1878 (there was none in 1877) is,

18. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part IV. 11. On *here and there* in Chaucer (his Pronunciation of the two *e's*), by Dr R. F. Weymouth; 12. On *α*. An Original Version of the *Knight's Tale*; *β*. the Date (1381) and Personages of the *Parlament of Foules*; *γ*. on *Anelyda and Arcite*, on Lollius, on Chaucer, and Boccaccio, &c, by Dr John Koch, with a fragment of a later *Palamon and Ercyte* from the Dublin MS D. 4. 18.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1882 (none in 1879, 80, 81) will probably be, Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part V.

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The issue for 1878, in the **First Series**, is,

- LVI. Autotype Specimens of the Chief Chaucer MSS, Part II: 9 from the Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27, and 1 from Lord Leconfield's MS.
- LVII. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II:—5. *The A B C,* from 6 MSS; 6. *The Mother of God,* from 3 MSS; 7. *Anelida and Arcyte,* from 5 MSS and Caxton's print; 8. *The Former Age,* from 2 MSS (with the Latin original, and Chaucer's prose Englishing); 9. *To his Scrivener* from Shirley's MS and Stowe's print; 10. *The House of Fame,* from 2 MSS and Caxton's and Thynne's prints.

Chaucer Society Publications: First Series.

The issue for 1879, in the **First Series**, is,

- LVIII. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part III, completing the *Parallel-Text*, and containing, 11. *The Legend of Good Women* from 6 MSS and Thynne's print; 12. *Truth* from 6 MSS; 13. *The Complaynt of Venus* from 6 MSS; 14. *The Envoy to Scogan* from 3 MSS; 15. *Marriage*, or *The Envoy to Bukton*, from 1 MS and Notary's and Thynne's prints; 16. *Gentillesse* from 6 MSS; 17. *Proverbs* from 3 MSS; 18. *Stedfastness* from 6 MSS; 19. *Fortune* from 6 MSS; 20. *Chaucer to his empty Purse*, from 6 MSS.

The issue for 1880, in the **First Series**, is,

- LIX. Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II:—1a. *The Parliament of Foules* from 3 MSS; 2. *The A B C* from 6 MSS; 3. *Anelida and Arcite* from 6 MSS; 4. *The Legend of Good Women*, in whole or part from 4 MSS; 5. *The Complaint of Mars* from 3 MSS; 6. *Truth* from 6 MSS; 7. *The Complaynt of Venus* from 3 MSS; 8. *Gentillesse* from 3 MSS; 9. *Lack of Stedfastness* from Thynne's print and 2 MSS; 10. *Fortune* from 2 MSS and Caxton's print.
- LX. Odd-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, containing, 3. *The A B C*, from 2 MSS; 4. *The House of Fame*, from the Pepys MS, &c.; 5. *The Legend of Good Women* from 3 MSS; 6. *The Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse* from 1 MS; 7. *The Complaint to Pity* from 2 MSS; 8. *The Parliament of Foules* from 1 MS; 9. *Truth* from 3 MSS; 10. *Envoy to Scogan* from 1 MS; 11. *Purse* from 1 MS.
- LXI. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, containing, VI. *Mother of God*; VII. *Anelida*; VIII. *The Former Age*; IX. *Adam Scrivener*; X. *The House of Fame*; XI. *Legende*; XII. *Truth*; XIII. *Venus*; XIV. *Scogan*; XV. *Marriage*; XVI. *Gentillesse*; XVII. *Proverbs*; XVIII. *Stedfastness*; XIX. *Fortune*; XX. *Purse*.
- LXII. Autotype Specimens of the chief Chaucer MSS. Part III: 2 from Henry V's MS of the *Troilus*, when he was Prince of Wales (now Mr Bacon Frank's); 1 from Shirley's MS of the *ABC* at Sion Coll.

The issue for 1881, in the **First Series**, will be chosen from,

- LXIII. The Six-Text, Part IX, with colored Lithographs of 6 Tellers of Tales and 6 emblematical Figures from the Cambridge Univers. MS Gg. 4. 27; Forewords, Title-pages for the three volumes, &c.; and Prof. Hiram Corson's Index to the Subjects and Names of *The Canterbury Tales*.
- LXIV to LXIX. 6 Appendices to the 6 MSS of the Six-Text, with Woodcuts and colored Lithographs of 6 Tellers of Tales and of 6 emblematical Figures from the Cambridge Univ. MS, Gg. 4. 27, &c., and colored Lithographs of the 23 Ellesmere MS Miniatures. The Hengwrt MS, Part VI, will contain The Canon's-Yeoman's Tale, from the Lichfield Cathedral MS.
- LXX. Part II of Mr W. M. Rossetti's Comparison of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* with Boccaccio's *Filistrato*. [Ready.]
- LXXI. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Troilus* from the Campall MS, b. 1416 A.D. (written for Henry V when Prince of Wales), Harleian 2280, and Cambr. Univ. Libr. Gg. 4. 27. [Ready.]

Prof. Hiram Corson has also agreed to edit the Society's *Chaucer Concordance*. For 1882, Miss Isabel Marshall and Miss Lela Porter are making a *Ryme-Index to Chaucer's Minor Poems*. To their Subjects and Names, Prof. H. Corson is making an Index. For 1884, or 1885, Chaucer's *Bocce* is ready for the First Series.

Among the Texts and Essays, &c., preparing for the Chaucer Society are:—

Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part V (*to be ready in 1882 or 1883*). Autotype Specimens of the chief Chaucer Manuscripts, by F. J. Furnivall, Pt IV. The Tale of *Beryn*, Part II. Introduction and Glossary, by Messrs Furnivall and W. G. Stone.

Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part V: 13. Chaucer's *Pardoner*: his character illustrated by documents of his time, by Dr J. J. Jusserand. 14. Why the *Romaunt of the Rose* is not Chaucer's, by Prof. Skeat, M.A. 15. (Probably) Chaucer's *Shipman*, by P. Q. Karkeek, Esq., of Dartmouth. 16. Chaucer's *Parson's Tale* compared with Frère Lorens's *Somme des Vices et des Vertus*, by Herr H. Simon.

Chaucer's *Road to Canterbury*, with Ogilby's Plan of it, 1675, and William Smith's Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1588; by the Rev. W. A. Scott Robertson, M.A., Hon. Sec. of the Kent Archæological Institute.

Life-Records of Chaucer, Part III, The Household book of Isabella, wife of Prince Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GEOFFREY CHAUCER first occurs; edited from the unique MS in the Brit. Museum, by Edward A. Bond, Esq., Chief Librarian. Part IV, Other Enrolments and Documents from the Public Record Office, the City of London Town-Clerk's Office, &c., edited by Walford D.oby, Esq., and F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

'A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* of Boccaccio,' HENRY WARD, Esq., of the MS Department of the British Museum. [*At Press*.]

¶ Heere folwen the wordes / bitwene the hoost
and the Millere 

When that the knyght had thus his tale ytold
In al the route / ne was ther yong ne oold
That he ne seyde / it was a noble storie
And worthy / for to drawen to memorie 3112

And namely the gentils euerichon
Oure hoost lough / and swoor so moot I gon
This gooth aright / vnbokeled is the Male
Lat se now / who shal telle another tale 3116

ffor trewely / the game is wel bigonne
Now telleth on sire Monk / if that ye konne
Sumwhat to quite with the knyghtes tale
The Millere / that for-dronken was al pale 3120

So that vnnethe / vp on his hors he sat
He nolde aualen / neither hood ne hat
Ne abyde no man / for his curteisie
But in Pilates voys / he gan to crie 3124

And swoor by Armes / and by blood / and bones
I kan a noble tale for the nones
With which / I wol now quite / the knyghtes tale
Oure hoost saugh / that he was dronke of ale 3128

And seyde / abyd Robyn my leue brother
Som better man / shal telle vs first another
Abyde / and lat vs werken thriftily [leaf 88]

¶ By goddes soule quod he / that wol nat I
ffor I wol speke / or elles go my wey
Oure hoost answerde / tel on a deuele wey
Thou art a fool / thy wit is ouercome

¶ Now herkneth quod the Millere alle and some 3136
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke / I knowe it by my soun
And therefore / if that I mysspeke or seye
Wyte it the Ale of Southwerk I [you] preye 3140

ffor I wol telle / a legende and a lyf
 Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf
 How that a clerk / hath set the wrightes cappe
 ¶ The Reue answerde / and seyde stynt thy clappe 3144
 Lat be / thy lewed dronken harlotrye
 It is a synne / and eek a greet folye
 To apeyren any man / or hym defame
 And eek' to bryngen wyues in swich fame 3148
 Thou mayst ynogh / of othere thynges seyn
 ¶ This dronke Millere / spak ful soone ageyn
 And seyde / leue brother Osewold
 Who hath no wyf / he is no Cokewold 3152
 But I sey nat therfore / that thou art oon
 Ther been ful goode wyues many oon
 And euere / a thousand goode / ayeyns oon badde
 That knowestow wel thy self / but if thou madde 3156
 Why artow angry / with my tale now
 I haue a wyf pardee / as wel as thou
 Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plogh
 Take vp on me / moore than ynogh 3160
 As demen of my self / that I were oon
 I wol bileue wel / that I am noon
 An housbonde / shal nat been Inquisityf
 Of goddes pryuetee / nor of his wyf 3164
 So he may fynde goddes foyson there
 Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere
 ¶ What sholde I moore seyn / but this Millere
 He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere 3168
 But tolde his cherles tale in his manere
 Mathynketh / that I shal reherce it heere
 And therfore every gentil wight I preye
 ffor goddes loue / demeth nat that I seye 3172
 Of yuel entente / but that I moot reherce
 Hir tales alle / be they bettre or werse
 Or elles / falsen som of my mateere
 And therfore / who so list it nat yheere 3176

GROUP A. § 3. MILLER'S PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS. 91

Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale
ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale
Of storial thyng' that toucheth gentillesse [leaf 22, back]
And eek moralitee / and hoolynesse 3180
Blameth nat me / if that ye chese amys
The Millers / is a cherl / ye knowe wel this
So was the Reue / and othere manye mo
And harlotrie // they tolden bothe two 3184
Auyseth yow / putteth me out of blame
And eek' men shal nat maken earnest of game

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Millere his tale.

WHilom / ther was dwellynge at Oxenford
 A riche gnof / that gestes heeld to bord 3188
 And of his craft he was a Carpenter
 With hym / ther was dwellynge a poure scoler
 Hadde lerned Art but al his fantasye [painting of the Miller]
 Was turned / for to lerne Astrologye 3192
 And koude / a certeyn of conclusiõs
 To demen / by Interrogaciõs
 If þat men asked hym / in certein houres
 Whan þat men sholde haue droghte or elles shoures 3196
 Or if men asked hym / what sholde bifalle
 Of euery thyng / I may nat rekene hem alle
 ¶ This clerk was cleped / hende Nicholas
 Of deerne loue he koude and of solas 3200
 And ther-to / he was sleigh / and ful priuee
 And lyk a mayden / meke for to see
 A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
 Allone / with-outen any compaignye 3204
 fful fetisly ydight with herbes swoote
 And he hym self / as sweete as is the roote
 Of lycorys / or any Cetewale
 His Almageste / and bookes grete and smale 3208
 His Astrelabie / longynge for his Art/
 His Augrym stones / layen faire a part/
 On shelues / couched at his beddes heed
 His presse ycovered / with a faldyng reed 3212
 And all aboue / ther lay a gay Sautrie
 On which / he made a nyghtes melodie
 So swetely / that al the chambre rong
 And Angelus ad virginem / he song 3216
 And after that he song the kynges noote
 fful often / blessed was his myrie throte

And thus / this sweete clerk' his tyme spent
 After his freendes fyndyng' and his rente 3220
 ¶ This Carpenter / hadde wedded newe a wyf
 Which that he louede / moore than his lyf /
 Of xviij. yeer / she was of Age [leaf 39]
 Ialous he was / and heeld hire narwe in cage 3224
 ffor she was yong and wylde / and he was old
 And demed hym self' been lik / a Cokewold
 He knew nat Catoun / for his wit was rude
 That bad / man sholde wedde his simylitude 3228
 Men sholde wedden after hire estaat
 ffor youthe and elde / is often at debaat
 But sith that he / was fallen in the snare
 He moste endure / as oother folk his care 3232
 ¶ ffair was this yonge wyf / and ther with al
 As any wezele / hir body / gent and smal
 A ceynt she werede / ybarred al of silk
 A barmcloth [eek] / as whit as morne Milk 3236
 Vp on hir lendes / ful of many a goore
 Whit was hir smok / and broyden al bifoore
 And eek bihynde / on hir coler aboute
 Of colblak silk / *with*-Inne and eek *with*-oute 3240
 The tapes / of hir white voluper
 Were of the same suyte of hir coler
 Hir filet' brood of silk' and set ful hye
 And sikerly / she hadde a likerous eye 3244
 fful smale y pulled / were hire browes two
 And tho were bent / and blake as any sloo
 She was / ful moore blisful on to see
 Than is / the newe / pereionette tree 3248
 And softer / than the wolfe is of a wether
 And by hir girdel / heeng a purs of lether
 Tasseled with grene / and perled *with* latoun
 In al this world / to seken vp and down 3252
 There nas no man so wys / *but* koude thenche
 So gay a popelote / or swich a wenche

fful brighter / was the shynynge of hir hewe
 Than in the tour / the noble yforged newe 3256
 ¶ But of hir song / it was / as loude and yerne
 As any swalwe / sittynge on a berne
 Ther to / she koude skippe / and make game
 As any kyde / or calf / folwynge his dame 3260
 Hir mouth was sweete / as bragot or the Meeth
 Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth
 Wynsynge she was / as is a ioly colt
 Long as a Mast and vprighte as a bolt 3264
 A brooch sche baar / vp on hir loue coler
 As brood / as is the boos of a bokeler
 Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye
 She was a prymerole / a piggesnye 3268
 ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde
 Or yet for any good yeman to wedde
 N Ow sire / and eft sire / so bifel the cas [leaf 39, back]
 That on a day / this hende Nicholas 3272
 ffil with this yonge wyf / to rage and pleye
 Whil that hir housbonde was at Oseneye
 As clerkes / ben ful subtile / and ful queynte
 And priuely / he caughte hire by the queynte 3276
 And seyde ywis / but if ich haue my wille
 ffor deerne loue of thee / lemman I spille
 And heeld hire harde / by the haunche bones
 And seyde / lemman loue me al atones 3280
 Or I wol dyen / also god me saue
 And she sproong / as a colt doth in the traue
 And with hir heed / sche wryed faste away
 And seyde / I wol nat kisse thee / by my fey 3284
 Why lat be quod ich / lat be Nicholas
 Or I wol crie / out / harrow / and allas
 Do wey youre handes / for your curteisye
 ¶ This Nicholas / gan mercy for to crye 3288
 And spak so faire / and profred hire so faste
 That she hir loue / hym graunted atte laste

And swoor hir ooth / by seint Thomas of Kent
 That she wol been / at his comandement 3292
 Whan þat she may / hir leyser wel espie
 Myn housbonde / is so ful of Ialousie
 That but ye wayte wel / and been priuee
 I woot right wel / I nam but deed quod she 3296
 Ye moste been ful deerne / as in this cas
 ¶ Nay ther of / care thee noght quod Nicholas
 A clerk hadde litherly / biset his whyle
 But if he koude / a Carpenter bigyle 3300
 And thus they been / accorded and ysworn
 To wayte a tyme / as I haue told biforn
 ¶ Whan Nicholas / had doon thus euerideel
 And thakked hire / aboute the lendes weel 3304
 He kist hire sweete / and taketh his sawtrie
 And pleyeth faste / and maketh melodie
 Thanne fil it thus / þat to the paryssh chirche
 Cristes / owene werkes / for to wirche 3308
 This goode wyf / went on an haliday
 Hir forheed shoon / as bright as any day
 So was it wasshen / whan she leet hir werk
 ¶ Now was ther of that chirche a parisshe clerk 3312
 The which / that was ycleped Absolon
 Crul was his heer / and as the gold it shoon
 And strouted as a fianne / large and brode
 fful streight and euene / lay his ioly shode 3316
 His rode was reed / hise eyen greye as goos
 With Powles wyndow / coruen on his shoes
 In hoses rede / he wente fetisly [leaf 40]
 Yclad he was / ful smal and proprely 3320
 Al in a kirtel / of a lyght waget
 fful faire and thikke / been the poyntes set
 And ther vp on / he hadde a gay surplys
 As whit as is / the blosme vp on the rys 3324
 A myrie child he was / so god me saue
 Wel koude he laten blood / and clippe and shaue

And maken a chartre of lond / or Acquitauunce
 In twenty manere / koude he trippe and daunce 3328
 After the scole / of Oxenford[e] tho
 And with his legges / casten to and fro
 And pleyen songes / on a small Rubible
 Ther to / he song som tyme / a loud quynble 3332
 And as wel / koude he pleye / on his giterne
 In al the toun / nas Brewhous ne Tauerne
 That he ne visited / with his solas
 Ther any gaylard Tappestere was 3336
 But sooth to seyn / he was somdel squaymous
 Of fartyng / and of speche daungerous
 ¶ This Absolon / pat iolif was and gay
 Gooth with a Sencer / on the haliday 3340
 Sensynge the wyues / of the parisshe faste
 And many a louely look / on hem he caste
 And namely / on this Carpenteris wyf
 To loke on hire / hym thoughte a myrie lyf 3344
 She was so propre / and sweete and likerous
 I dar wel seyn / if she hadde been a Mous
 And he a Cat / he wold hire hente anon
 ¶ This parisshe clerk / this ioly Absolon 3348
 Hath in his herte / swich a loue longynge
 That of no wyf / took he noon offrynge
 ffor curteisie / he seyde he wolde noon
 The Moone / whan it was nyght / ful brighte shoon 3352
 And Absolon / his gyterne hath ytake
 ffor paramours / he thoghte for to wake
 And forth he gooth / iolif and amorous
 Til he cam / to the Carpenteres hous 3356
 A litel / after Cokkes hadde yerowe
 And dressed hym vp / by a shotwyndowe
 That was / vp on the Carpenteris wal
 He syngeth in his voys / gentil and smal 3360
 Now deere lady / if thy wille be
 I pray yow / that ye wole thynke on me

fful wel acordaunt to his gyternynge
 This Carpenter awook / and herde synge 3364
 And spak vn to his wyf / and seyde anon
 What Alison / herestow nat Absolon
 That chaunteth thus / vnder oure boures wal [leaf 40, back]
 And she answerde hir housbonde / ther with al 3368
 Yis God woot Iohn / I heere it euery del
 ¶ This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than weel
 ffro day to day / to day / this ioly Absolon
 So woweth hire / that hym is wo bigon 3372
 He waketh / al the nyght / and al the day
 He kembeth hise lokkes brode / and made hym gay
 He woweth hire / by meenes / and brocage
 And swoor / he wolde been hir owene page 3376
 He syngeth brokkyng / as a nyghtyngale
 He sente hire pyment Meeth and spiced Ale
 And wafres / pipyng / hoot / out of the gleede
 And for she was of toun / he profreth meede 3380
 ffor som folk wol ben wonnen for richesse
 And somme for strokes / and somme for gentillesse ¶ vnde Ovidius /
 Ictibus Agrestis.
 ¶ Somtyme / to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye
 He pleyeth Herodes vp on a Scaffold hye 3384
 But what auailleth hym / as in this cas
 She loueth so / this hende Nicholas
 That Absolon / may blowe the bukkes horn
 He ne hadde / for his labour but a scorn 3388
 And thus / she maketh Absolon hire Ape
 And al his earnest turneth til a Iape
 fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye
 Men seyn right thus / alwey the nye alye 3392
 Maketh / the ferre leue to be looth
 ffor though that Absolon / be wood or wrooth
 By cause / that he fer was from hire siglite
 This nye Nicholas / stood in his lighte 3396
 N Ow bere thee wel / thou hende Nicholas
 ffor Absolon / may waille and synge allas

And so bifel it on a Saterdag
 This Carpenter / was goon til Osenay 3400
 And hende Nicholas and Alisoun
 Acorded been / to this conclusioun
 That Nicholas / shal shapen hym a wyle
 This sely Ialous housbonde to bigyle 3404
 And if so be / the game wente aright
 She sholde slepen / in his arm al nyght
 ffor this was / his desir / and hire also
 And right anon / with-uten wordes mo 3408
 This Nicholas / no lenger wolde tarie
 But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie
 Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye
 And to hire housbonde / bad hire for to seye 3412
 If that he axed / after Nicholas
 She sholde seye / she nyste where he was
 Of al that day / she saugh hym nat with eye [leaf 51]
 She trowed / that he was in maladye 3416
 ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle
 He nolde answer / for thyng that myghte falle
 ¶ This passeth forth / al thilke Saterdag
 That Nicholas / stille in his chambre lay 3420
 And eet and sleepe / or dide what hym leste
 Til Sonday / that the sonne gooth to reste
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / hath greet merueyle
 Of Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym eyle 3424
 And seyde / I am adrad by Seint Thomas
 It stondeth nat aright with Nicholas
 God shilde / that he deyde sodeynly
 This world / is now ful tikel sikerly 3428
 I saugh to day / a cors yborn to chirche
 That now / on monday last / I saugh hym wirche
 ¶ Go vp quod he / vn to his knaue anoon
 Clepe at his dore / or knokke with a stoon 3432
 Looke how it is / and tel me boldely
 ¶ This knaue / gooth him vp ful sturdily

And at the chambre dore / whil that he stood
 He eride and knocked / as that he were wood 3436
 What how / what do ye maister Nicholay
 How may ye slepen / al the longe day
 ¶ But al for noght^t he herde nat a word
 An hole he foond / ful lowe vp on a bord 3440
 Ther as the Cat^t was wont In for to crepe
 And at that hole / he looked In ful depe
 And at the laste / he hadde of hym a sighte
 This Nicholas / sat capyng euere vp-righte 3444
 As he had kiked / on the newe moone
 Adoun he gooth / and tolde his maister soone
 In what array / he saugh that ilke man
 ¶ This Carpenter / to blessen hym bigan 3448
 And seyde / help vs seinte ffrydeswyde
 A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde
 This man is falle / with his Astromye
 In som woodnesse / or in som Agonye 3452
 I thoghte ay wel / how that it sholde be
 Men sholde nat knowe / of goddes pryuetee
 Ye / blessed be alwey a lewed man
 That noght^t but oonly his bileue kan 3456
 So ferde another clerk^t with Astromye
 He walked in the feeldes / for to pryve
 Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle
 Til he was / in a Marleput yfalle 3460
 He saugh nat that / but yet by seint [Thomas¹] [¹ later hand]
 Me reweth soore / of hende Nicholas
 He shal be rated / of his studyng^t [leaf 41, back]
 If that I may / by Ihesus heuene kyng^t 3464
 ¶ Get me a staf / that I may vnderspore
 Whil þat thou Robyn / heuest of the dore
 He shal / out of his studyng^t as I gesse
 And to the chambre dore / he gan hym dresse 3468
 His knaue / was a strong carl / for the noones
 And by the haspe / he haaf it of atones

In to the floor / the dore fil anon
 This Nicholas / sat ay as stille as stoon 3472
 And euere caped vpward in to the Eir
 This Carpenter / wende he were in despeir
 And hente hym / by the sholdres myghtily
 And shook hym harde / and cride spitously 3476
 What Nicholay / what how / what looke adoun
 Awake / and thenk on Cristes passioun
 I crouche thee / from Elues / and fro wightes
 Ther-with the nyghtspel / seyde he anonrightes 3480
 On foure halues / of the hous aboute
 And on the thresshold / of the dore with-oute
 Ihesu Crist and seint Benedight
 Blesse this hous / from euery wikked wight 3484
 ffor nyghtes uerye / the white pater noster
 Where wentestow / seint Petres soster
 ¶ And atte laste / this hende Nicholas
 Gan for to sike soore / and seyde allas 3488
 Shal al this world / be lost eftsoones now?
 ¶ This Carpenter / answerde / what seystow?
 What thyнк on god / as we doon / men þat swynke
 ¶ This Nicholas answerde / fecche me drynke 3492
 And after / wol I speke in pryuetee
 Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and thee
 I wol telle it noon oother man certeyn
 ¶ This Carpenter / goth down / and comth ageyn 3496
 And broghte / of myghty Ale a large quart
 And whan þat ech of hem / had dronke his part
 This Nicholas / his dore faste shette
 And doun the Carpenter / by hym he sette 3500
 ¶ He seyde Iohn myn hoost lief and deere
 Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe swere me heere
 That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye
 ffor it is / cristes conseil that I seye 3504
 And if thou telle man / thou art forlore
 ffor this vengauce / thou shalt han therfore

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 101

That if thou wreye me / thou shalt be wood
 Nay Crist forbode it' for his hooly blood 3508
 Quod tho this sely man / I nam no labbe
 Ne though I seye / I am nat lief to gabbe
 Sey what thou wolt / I shal it neuere telle (leaf 62)
 To child ne wyf / by hym that harwed helle 3512
 Now Iohn quod Nicholas / I wol nat lye
 I have yfounde / in myn Astrologye
 As I haue looked / in the moone bright'
 That now a monday next' at quarter nyght' 3516
 Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood
 That half so greet' was neuere Noees flood
 This world he seyde / in lasse than an hour
 Shal al be dreynt / so hidous is the shour 3520
 Thus schal mankynde drenche / and lese hir lyf'
 ¶ This Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf
 And shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun
 ffor sorwe of this / he fil almoost adoun 3524
 And seyde / is ther no remedie in this cas
 ¶ Why yis for gode / quod hende Nicholas
 If thou wolt werken / aftir loore and reed
 Thou mayst nat werken / after thyn owene heed 3528
 ffor thus seith Salomon / that was ful trewe
 Werk al by conseil / and thou shalt nat rewe
 And if thou werken wolt' by good conseil
 I vndertake / with-uten Mast' and seyl 3532
 Yet shal I sauen / hire / and thee / and me
 Hastow nat herd / hou saued was Noe
 Whan þat oure lord / hadde warned hym biforn
 That al the world / with water sholde be lorn 3536
 ¶ Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yooere ago
 ¶ Hastou nat herd / quod Nicholas also
 The sorwe of Noe / with his felaweshipe
 Er þat he myghte / brynge his wyf to shipe 3540
 Hym hadde be leuere / I dar wel vndertake
 At thilke tyme / than alle hise wetheres blake

102 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

That she hadde had a shipe / hir self allone
 And ther-fore / woostou what is best to doone 3544
 This asketh haste / and of an hastif thyng
 Men may nat preche / or maken tariyng
 ¶ Anon go gete vs faste in to this In
 A knedyng trogh / or ellis a kymelyn 3548
 ffor ech of vs / but loke þat they be large
 In whiche / we mowe swymme as in a barge
 And han ther-Inne / vitaille suffisant
 But for a day / fy on the remenant 3552
 The water shal aslake / and goon away
 Aboute pryme / vp on the nexte day
 But Robyn / may nat wite of this / thy knaue
 Ne eek thy mayde Gille I may nat saue 3556
 Axe nat why / for though thou aske me
 I wol nat tellen goddes pryuetee
 Suffiseth thee / but if thy wittes madde [leaf 42, back]
 To han as greet a grace / as Noe hadde 3560
 Thy wyf shal I wel sauen / out of doute
 Go now thy wey / and speed thee heer aboute
 ¶ But whan thou hast for hire and thee and me
 Ygeten vs / thise knedyng tubbes thre 3564
 Thanne shaltow hange hem / in the roof ful hye
 That no man / of oure purueiaunce spye
 And whan thou thus hast doon / as I haue seyde
 And hast oure vitaille / faire in hem yleyd 3568
 And eek an Ax / to smyte the corde atwo
 Whan þat the water comth / that we may go
 And broke an hole / an heigh vp on the gable
 Vnto the gardynward / ouer the stable 3572
 That we may frely / passen forth oure way
 Whan þat the grete shour / is goon away
 Thanne shal I swymme / as myrie I vndertake
 As dooth the white doke / after hire drake 3576
 Thanne wol I clepe / how Alison / how Iohn
 Be myrie / for the flood wol passe anon

And thou wolt seyn / hayl maister Nicholay
 Good morwe / I se thee wel / for it is day 3580
 And thaune / shul we be / lordes al oure lyf/
 Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf/
 ¶ But of o thyng I warne thee ful right
 Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght 3584
 That we ben entred / in to shippes bord
 That noon of vs / ne speke nat a word
 Ne clepe / ne crie / but been in his preyere
 ffor it is / goddes owene heeste deere 3588
 ¶ Thy wyf and thou / moote hange fer atwynne
 ffor that bitwixe yow / shal be no synne
 Na moore in lookyng / than ther shal in deede
 This ordinance is seyde / so god thee speede 3592
 Tomorwe at nyght whan folk ben alle aslepe
 In to our knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe
 And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace
 Go now thy way / I haue no lenger space 3596
 To make of this / no lenger sermonyng
 Men seyn thus / sende the wise / and sey no thyng
 Thou art so wys it needeth thee nat to preche
 Go saue oure lyf / and that I the biseche 3600
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / goth forth his way
 fful ofte / he seith alas and weylawey
 And to his wyf / he tolde his pryueetes
 And she was war / and knew it bet than he 3604
 What al this queynte cast was for to seye
 But natheles / she ferde as she wolde deye
 And seyde alas / go forth thy way anon [leaf 45]
 Help vs to scape / or we been lost echon 3608
 I am thy trewe / verray wedded wyf
 Go deere spouse / and help to saue oure lyf
 LO / which a greet thyng / is Affeccion ¶ Auctor
 Men may dyen / of ymaginacion 3612
 So depe / may impressiõ be take
 This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake

Hym thynketh verrailly / that he may see
 Noes flood / come walwyng as the see 3616
 To drenchen Alisoun / his hony deere
 He wepeth / weyleth / maketh sory cheere
 He siketh / *with* ful many a sory swogh
 He gooth / and geteth hym a knedyng trogh 3620
 And after that / a tubbe and a kymelyn
 And pruely / he sente hem to his In
 And heng' hem / in the roof in pruyetee
 His owene hand made laddres thre 3624
 To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes
 In to the tubbes / hangyng in the balkes
 And hem vitailleth / bothe trogh and tubbe
 With breed and chese / and good Ale in a Iubbe 3628
 Suffisyng right ynogh / as for a day
 But er that he / hadde maad al this array
 He sente his knaue / and eek his wenche also
 Vp on his nede / to london for to go 3632
 And on the Monday / whan it drow to nyght
 He shette his dore / with-oute candel lyght
 And dresseth alle thyng' as it shal be
 And shortly / vp they clomben alle thre 3636
 They sitten stille / wel a furlong way
 ¶ Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay
 And clom quod Iohā / and clom seyde Alisoun
 This Carpenter / seyde his deuocioun 3640
 And stille he sit / and biddeth his preyere
 Awaityng on the reyn / if he it heere
 ¶ The dede sleepe / for wery bisynesse
 ffil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse 3644
 Aboute corfew tyme / or litel moore
 ffor trauaille of his goost' he groneth soore
 And eft he routeth / for his heed myslay
 Doun of the laddre / stalketh Nicholay 3648
 And Alisoun / ful softe adoun she spedde
 With-uten wordes mo / they goon to bedde

Ther as the Carpenter / is wont to lye
 Ther was the reuel / and the melodye 3652
 And thus [lith] Alison / and Nicholas
 In bisynesse / of myrthe and of solas
 Til that the belle of laudes gan to ryng 3656
 And freres in the Chauncel gonne synge
This parisshe clerk / this Amorous Absolon
 That is for loue alwey so wo bigon
 Vp on the Monday / was at Oseneye
 With a compaignye / hym to disporte and pleye 3660
 And axed vp on cas a Cloistrer
 fful priuely / after Iohn the Carpenter
 And he drough hym a part out of the chirche
 And seyde I noot I saugh hym heere nat wirche 3664
 Syn Saterday / I trow that he be went
 ffor tymber / ther our Abbot hath hym sent
 ffor he is wont for tymber for to go
 And dwellen at the grange / a day or two 3668
 Or elles / he is at his hous certeyn
 Where that he be / I kan nat soothly seyn
 ¶ This Absolon / ful ioly was and light
 And thoghte / now is tyme wake al nyght 3672
 ffor sikirly I saugh him nat stiryng
 Aboute his dore / syn day bigan to spryng
 ¶ So moot I thryue / I shal at cokkes crowe
 fful pryuely / knocke at his wyndowe 3676
 That stant ful lowe / vp on his boures wal
 To Alison / now wol I tellen al
 My loue longynge / for yet I shal nat mysse
 That at the leste wey / I shal hire kisse 3680
 Som maner confort shal I haue parfay
 My mouth hath icched al this longe day
 That is a signe of kysyng attle leste
 Al nyght me mette eek / I was at a feeste 3684
 Therfore I wol goon slepe / an houre or tweye
 And al the nyght thanne wol I wake and pleye

Whan that the firste cok' hath crowe anon
 Vp rist' this ioly louere Absolon 3688
 And hym arraieth / gay at poynt deuys
 But first' he cheweth greyn of lycorys
 To smellen sweete / er he hadde kembd his heer
 Vnder his tonge / a trewe loue he beer 3692
 ffor ther-by / wende he to ben gracious
 He rometh / to the Carpenteres hous
 And stille he stant' vnder the shot wyndowe
 Vn to his brist it raughte / it was so lowe 3696
 And softe he knokketh / with a semy soun
 What do ye hony comb / sweete Alisoun
 My faire bryd / my sweete cynamome
 Awaketh lemman myn / and speketh to me 3700
 Wel litel thynken ye / vp on my wo
 That for youre loue / I swete ther I go
 No wonder is / though that I swelte and swete [leaf 44]
 I moorne / as dooth a lamb after the tete 3704
 Ywis lemman / I haue swich loue longynge
 That lik a turtel trewe / is my moornyng
 I may nat ete / na moore than a mayde
 ¶ Go fro the wyndow / lakke fool she sayde 3708
 As help me god / it wol nat be com pa me
 I loue another / and elles I were to blame
 Wel bet than thee / by Ihesu Absolon
 Go forth thy wey / or I wol caste a ston 3712
 And lat me slepe / a twenty deuel wey
 ¶ Allas quod Absolon / and weylawey
 That trewe loue / was euere so yuel biset
 Thanne kys me / syn it may be no bet 3716
 ffor Ihesus loue / and for the loue of me
 ¶ Wiltow thanne / go thy wey quod she?
 ¶ Ye certes lemman / quod this Absolon
 ¶ Thanne make thee redy quod she I come anon 3720
 And vn to Nicholas / she seyde stille
 Now hust' and thou shalt laughen al thy fille
 ¶ This Absolon / doun sette hym on his knees

GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 107

And seyde / I am lord at alle degrees 3724
 ffor after this / I hope ther cometh moore
 Lemman thy grace / and sweete bryd thyn oore
 ¶ The wyndow / she yndoth / and that in haste
 Hauē do quod she / com of and speed the faste 3728
 Lest that oure Neighebores / thee espie
 ¶ This Absolon / gan wype his mouth ful drie
 Dirk was the nyght^t as pich / or as the cole
 And at the wyndow / out she pitte hir hole 3732
 And Absolon / hym fil no bet ne wers
 But *with* his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers
 fful sauourly / er he was war of this
 ¶ Abak he stirte / and thoughte it was amys 3736
 ffor wel he wiste / a womman hath no berd
 He felte a thyng al rough / and long yherd
 And seyde / fy alas what haue I do
 ¶ Tehee quod she / and clapte the wyndow to 3740
 And Absolon / gooth forth a sory pas
 ¶ A berd a berd / quod hende Nicholas
 By goddes corpus / this goth faire and weel
 ¶ This sely Absolon / herde euery deel 3744
 And on his lippe / he gan for Anger byte
 And to hym self / he seyde I shal thee quyte
 ¶ Who rubbeth now / who froteth now his lippes
With dust *with* sond / *with* straw / *with* clooth / *with* chippes
 But Absolon / that seith ful ofte alas 3749
 My soule / bitake I vn to Sathanas
 But me were leuere / than al this toun quod he [leaf 44, back]
 Of this despit^t awroken for to be 3752
 Alas quod he / alas I ne hadde ybleynt
 His hoothe loue / was coold and al yqueynt^t
 ffor fro that tyme / that he hadde kiste hir ers
 Of paramours / he sette nat a kers 3756
 ffor he was / heeled of his maladie
 fful ofte / paramours he gan deffie
 And weepe / as dooth a child that is ybete
 A softe paas / he wente ouer the strete 3760

Vn til a smyth / men cleped daun Gerueys
 That in his forge / smythed plough harneys
 He sharpeth shaar / and kultour bisily
 This Absolon / knokketh al esily 3764
 And seyde / vndo Gerueys / and that anon
 ¶ What who artow^s I am heere Absolon
 What Absolon / for Cristes swete tree
 Why rise ye so rathe / ey benedicitee 3768
 What eyleth yow / som gay gerl god it woot
 Hath broght yow thus / vp on the viritoot
 By seinte note / ye woot wel what I mene
 ¶ This Absolon / ne roghte nat a bene 3772
 Of al his pley / no word agayn he yaf
 He hadde / moore tow / on his distaf
 Than Gerueys knew / and seyde freend so deere
 That hote kultour / in the chymenee heere 3776
 As lene it me / I haue ther-with to doone
 And I wol / brynge it thee / agayn ful soone
 ¶ Gerueys answerde / certes were it gold
 Or in a poke / nobles alle vntold^d 3780
 Thou sholdest have / as I am trewe smyth
 Ey cristes foo / what wol ye do ther-with^s
 ¶ Ther of quod Absolon / be as be may
 I shal wel telle it thee / to morwe day 3784
 And caughte the kultour / by the colde stele
 fful softe / out at the dore he gan to stele
 And wente / vn to the Carpenteris wal
 He cogheth first / and knokketh ther with al 3788
 Vp on the wyndowe / right as he dide er
 ¶ This Alison answerde / Who is ther?
 That knokketh so / I warante it a theef
 ¶ Why nay quod he / god woot my sweete leef 3792
 I am thyn Absolon / my deerelyng
 Of gold quod he / I haue thee broght a ryng
 My mooder yaf it me / so god me saue
 fful fyn it is / and ther-to wel ygraue 3796

This wol I yeue thee / if thou me kisse
 ¶ This Nicholas / was risen for to pisse
 And thoughte / he wolde amenden al the Iape [leaf 46]
 He sholde kisse his [ers] er that he scape 3800
 And vp the wyndowe / dide he hastily
 And out his ers / he putteth pryuely
 Ouer the buttoke / to the haunche bon
 And ther with / spak this clerk this Absolon 3804
 Spek sweete bryd / I noot nat where thou art
 ¶ This Nicholas / anon leet fle a fart/
 As greet as it had been a thonder dent
 That with the strook he was almoost yblent 3808
 And he was redy / with his Iren hoot
 And Nicholas / amydde ers he smoot
 ¶ Of gooth the skyn / an hande brede aboute
 The hootte kultour / brende so his toute 3812
 And for the smert he wende for to dye
 As he were wood / for wo he gan to crye
 Help / water / water / help for goddes herte
 ¶ This Carpenter / out of his slomber sterte 3816
 And herde oon crien water / as he were wood
 And thoughte / Allas / now comth Nowelis flood
 He sit hym vp / with-uten wordes mo
 And with his Ax / he smoot the corde atwo 3820
 And doun gooth al / he foond neither to selle
 Ne breed ne Ale / til he cam to the Celle
 Vp on the floor / and ther aswowne he lay
 ¶ Vp stirte hire / Alison and Nicholay 3824
 And criden / out and harrow in the strete
 The neighbores / bothe smale and grete
 In ronnen / for to gauren on this man
 That yet aswowne he lay / bothe pale and wan 3828
 ffor with the fal / he brosten hadde his Arm
 But stonde he moste / vn to his owene harm
 ffor whan he spak / he was anon bore doun
 With hende Nicholas / and Alisoun 3832

110 GROUP A. § 4. MILLER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

They tolden euery man / that he was wood
 He was agast so / of Nowelis flood
 Thurgh fantasie / that of his vanytee
 He hadde ybought hym / knedyng tubbes thre 3836
 And hadde hem hanged / in the roue aboue
 And þat he preyde hem / for goddes loue
 To sitten in the roof / par compaignye
 ¶ The folk gan laughen / at his fantasye 3840
 In to the roof / they kiken and they cape
 And turned al his harm / vn to a lape
 ffor / what so / þat this Carpenter answerde
 It was for noght no man his reson herde 3844
 With othes grete / he was so sworn adoun
 That he was holde wood in al the toun
 ffor euery clerk / anonright / heeld with oother [leaf 45, back]
 They seyde / the man was wood / my leue broother 3848
 And euery wight / gan laughen of this stryf/
 Thus / swyued was / this Carpenteris wyf/
 ffor al his kepyng and his Ialousye
 And Absolon / hath kist hir nether eye 3852
 And Nicholas / is scalded in the towte
 This tale is doon / and god saue al the rowte
 ¶ Heere endeth the Millere his tale

[Slight break in the MS.]

¶ The prologe / of the Reues tale

WHAN folk hadde laughen / at this nyce cas
 Of Absolon / and hende Nicholas 3856
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they seyde
 But for the moore part they loughe and pleyde
 Ne at this tale / I saugh no man hym greue
 But it were oonly / Osewold the Reue 3860
 By-cause / he was / of Carpenteris craft
 A litel Ire / in his herte ylaft
 He gan to grucche / and blamed it a lite
 ¶ So theek / quod he / ful wel koude I yow quite 3864
 With bleryng^t of a proud Milleres eye
 If that me liste / speke of ribaudye
 But ik am oold / me list no pley for Age
 Gras tyme is doon / my fodder is now forage 3868
 This white tope / writeth myne olde yeris
 Myn herte is mowled also as myne heris
 But if I fare / as dooth an Openers
 ¶ That ilke fruyt / is euer leng the wers 3872
 Til it be roten / in Mullok^t or in stree
 We olde men / I drede so fare we
 Til we be roten / kan we nat be rype
 We hoppen ay / whil that the world wol pype 3876
 ffor in oure wyl / ther stiketh euere a nayl
 To haue an hoor heed / and a grene tayl
 As hath a leek / for thogh oure myght be goon
 Oure wyl / desireth folie euere in oon 3880
 ffor whan we may nat doon / than wol we speke
 Yet in oure Asshen olde / is fyr yreke
 ¶ ffoure gleedes han we / whiche I shal deuyse
 Avauntyn^t liyng^t Anger / Coueitise 3884
 Thise foure sparkles / longen vn to eelde
 Oure olde lemes / mowe wel been vnweelde

But wyl ne shal nat failen / that is sooth [leaf 46]
 And yet' ik haue alwey a Coltes tootth 3888
 As many a yeer / as it is passed henne
 Syn that my tappe of lif / bigan to renne
 ffor sikerly / whan I was bore / anon
 Deeth drough the tappe of lyf / and leet' it gon 3892
 And euer sithe / hath so the tappe yronne
 Til that almoost' al empty is the tonne
 The streem of lyf / now droppeth on the chymbe
 The sely tonge / may wel rynge and chymbe 3896
 Of wrecchednesse / that passed is ful yoor
 With olde folk' saue dotage is namoore
Whan that oure hoost / hadde herd this sermonyng'
 He gan to speke / as lordly as a kyng' 3900
 He seide / what amounteth al this wit'
 What' shul we speke alday of hooly writ'
 The deuel / made a Reue for to preche
 And of a Soutere / Shipman or a leche 3904
 Sey forth thy tale / and tarie nat the tyme
 Lo Depeford' / and it is half wey pryme
 Lo Grenewych / ther many a shrewe is Inne
 It were al tyme / thy tale to bigynne 3908
Now sires / quod this Osewold the Reue
 I pray yow alle / that ye nat yow greue
 Thogh I answee / and somdeel sette his howue
 ffor leueful is / with force & force of showue ¶ vim vi repellere
 ¶ This dronke Millere hath ytoold vs heer 3913
 How that' bigyled was a Carpenter
 Perauenture in scorn / for I am oon
 And by youre leue / I shal him quite anoon 3916
 Right in his cherles termes wol I speke
 I pray to god / his nekke mote breke
 He kan wel / in myn eye seen a stalke
 But in his owene / he kan nat seen a balke 3920

¶ Heere bigynneth the Reues tale

A T Trumpyngton / nat fer fro Cantebrigge
 Ther gooth a brook / and ouer that a brigge
 Vp on the which[e] brook / ther stant a Melle
A And this is verray sooth / þat I yow telle [painting of
the Reue]
 A Millere / was ther dwellynge many a day 3925
 As eny pecok he was proud and gay
 Pipen he koude and fisshe / and nettes beete
 And turne coppes / and wel wrastle and sheete 3928
 And by his belt he baar a long panade
 And of a swerd / ful trenchant was the blade
 A ioly poppere / baar he in his pouche [leaf 46, back]
 Ther was no man / for peril / dorste hym touche 3932
 A Sheffield thwitel / baar he in his hose
 Round was his face / and camuse was his nose
 As piled as an Ape / was his skulle
 He was a Market betere atte fulle 3936
 Ther dorste no wight / hand vp on hym legge
 That he ne swoor / he sholde anon abegge
 A theef he was / of corn and eek of Mele
 And that a sly / and vsaunt for to stele 3940
 His name was hoote / deynous Symkyn
 A wyf he hadde / ycomen of noble kyn
 The person of the toun / hir fader was
 With hire he yaf / ful many a panne of bras 3944
 ffor that Symkyn / sholde in his blood allye
 She was yfostred in a Nonnerye
 ffor Symkyn / wolde no wyf / as he sayde
 But if she were / wel ynorissed and a mayde 3948
 To sauen his estaat of yomanrye
 And she was proud / and peert as is a pye
 A ful fair sighte / was it vp on hem two
 On haly dayes / biforn hire wolde he go 3952

With his typet / [y]bounde about his heed
 And she cam after / in a gyte of reed
 And Symkyn / hadde hosen of the same
 Ther dorste no wight / clepen hire but dame 3956
 Was noon so hardy / that wente by the weye
 That with hire / dorste rage / or ones pleye
 But if / he wolde be slayn of Symkyn
 With panade / or with knyf / or boidekyn 3960
 ffor Ialous folk / ben perilous eueremo
 Algate / they wolde hire wyues wenden so
 And eek / for she was somdel smoterlich
 She was as digne / as water in a dich 3964
 As ful of hoker / and of bismare
 Hir thoughte / þat a lady sholde hire spare
 What for hire kynrede / and hir nortelrie
 That she hadde lerned in the Nonnerie 3968
 ¶ A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two
 Of twenty yeer / with-outen any mo
 Sauynge a child / þat was of half yeer age
 In Cradel it lay / and was a propre page 3972
 This wenche thikke / and wel ygrowen was
 With kamuse nose / and eyen greye as glas
 Buttokes brode / and brestes rounde and hye
 But right fair was hire heer / I wol nat lye 3976
 ¶ This person of the toun / for she was feir
 In purpos was / to maken hire his heir
 Bothe of his catel / and his Mesuage [leaf 47]
 And straunge / he made it of hir mariage 3980
 His purpos was / for to bistowe hire hye
 In to som worthy blood of Auncetrye
 ffor hooly chirches good / moot been despended
 On hooly chirches blood / that is descended 3984
 Therfore / he wolde his hooly blood honoure
 Though / that he hooly chirche sholde devoure
 Gret sokene / hath this Millere / out of doute
 G With whete and Malt of al the land aboute 3988

And nameliche / ther was a greet Colledge
 Men clepen the Soler halle at Cantebregge
 Ther was hir whete / and eek hir malt ygrounde
 And on a day / it happed in a stounde 3992
 Sik lay the Maunciple / on a maladye
 Men wenden wisly / that he sholde dye
 ffor which / this Millere / stal bothe mele and corn
 An hundred tyme / moore than biforn 3996
 ffor ther biforn / he stal but curteisly
 But now / he was a theef outrageously
 ffor which / the wardeyn chidde and made fare
 But ther of / sette the Millere nat a tare 4000
 He craketh boost / and swoor it was nat so
 ¶ Thanne were ther / yonge poure clerkes two
 That dwelten in this halle / of which I seye
 Testif they were / and lusty for to pleye 4004
 And oonly / for hire myrthe and reuerye
 Vp on the wardeyn / bisily they crye
 To yeue hem leue / but a litel stounde
 To goon to Mille / and seen hir corn ygrounde 4008
 And hardily / they dorste leye hir nekke
 The Millere shold nat stele hem / half a pekke
 Of corn by sleighte / ne by force hem reue
 And at the laste / the wardeyn yaf hem leue 4012
 Iohn highte that oon / and Aleyn heet that oother
 Of o toun were they born / that highte Strother
 ffer in the North / I kan nat telle where
 ¶ This Aleyn / maketh redy al his gere 4016
 And on an hors / the sak he caste anon
 fforth goth Aleyn the clerk / and also Iohn
 With good swerd & / and bokeler by hir side
 Iohn knew the wey / hem neded no gyde 4020
 And at the Mille / the sak adoun he layth
 Aleyn spak first / al hayl Symon & yfayth
 Hou fares thy faire doghter / and thy wyf
 ¶ Aleyn welcome quod Symkyn / by my lyf 4024

And Iohn also / how now / what do ye heer
 ¶ Symond^d quod Iohn / by god nede has na peer
 Hym boes serue hym selne / that has na swayn [leaf 47, back]
 Or elles / he is a fool / as clerkes sayn 4028
 Oure Manciple / I hope / he wil be deed
 Swa werkes ay / the wanges in his heed
 And forthy / is I come / and eek Alayn
 To grynde oure corn / and carie it ham agayn 4032
 I pray yow / spede vs heythen that ye may
 ¶ It shal be doon / quod Symkyn by my fay
 What wol ye doon / whil that it is in hande
 ¶ By God / right by the hopur wil I stande 4036
 Quod Iohn / and se / how that the corn gas In
 Yet saugh I neuere / by my fader kyn
 How that the hopur / wagges til and fra
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / Iohn wiltow swa 4040
 Thanne wil I be byneth / by my croun
 And se / how þat the Mele falles down
 In to the trough / that sal be my disport
 ffor Iohn yfaith / I may been of youre sort 4044
 I is / as ille a Millere / as are ye
 ¶ This Millere / smyled of hir nycetee
 And thoghte / al this nys doon / but for a wyle
 They wene / þat no man may hem bigile 4048
 But by my thrift / yet shal I blere hir eye
 ffor al the sleight / in hir Philosophye
 The moore queynte crekes / that they make
 The moore wol I stele / whan I take 4052
 In stide of flour / yet wol I yeue hem bren
 The gretteste clerkes / been noght wisest men
 As whilom to the wolf / thus spak the Mare
 Of al hir Art [ne] counte I noght a tare 4056
 ¶ Out at the dore / he gooth ful pryuely
 Whan þat he saugh / his tyme softely
 He looketh vp and down / til he hath founde
 The clerkes hors / ther as it stood ybounde 4060

Bihynde the Mille / vnder a lefsel
 And to the hors / he goth hym faire and wel
 He strepeth of the brydel / right anon
 And whan the hors was laus / he gynneth gon 4064
 Toward the fen / ther wilde Mares renne
 forth with wehee / thurgh thikke *and* thurgh thenne
 ¶ This Millere gooth agayn / no word he seyde
 But dooth his note / and with the clerkes playde 4068
 Til that hir corn / was faire and weel ygrounde
 And whan the Mele / is sakked and ybounde
 This Iohn goth out and fynt his hors away
 And gan to crie / harrow and weylaway 4072
 Oure hors is lorn / Alayn for goddes banes
 Stepe on thy feet com out man al atanes
 Allas / our wardeyn / has his palfrey lorn [leaf 48]
 This Aleyn al forgat / bothe Mele and corn 4076
 Al was out of his mynde / his housbondrie
 What whilk way is he geen / he gan to crie
 ¶ The wyf cam lepynge Inward with a ren
 She seyde allas / youre hors goth to the fen 4080
 With wilde mares / as faste as he may go
 Vnthank come on his hand / that boond hym so
 And he pat better / sholde han knyht the reyne
 ¶ Allas quod Aleyn / for cristes peyne 4084
 Lay down thy swerd / and I wil myn als wa
 I is ful wight god waat as is a raa
 By god[des] herte / he sal nat scape vs bathe
 Why nadstow pit the Capul in the lathe 4088
 Ilhayl / by god Aleyn / thou is a fonne
 ¶ This sely clerkes / han ful faste yronne
 To-ward the fen / bothe Aleyn and eek Iohn
 ¶ And whan the Millere / saugh pat they were gon 4092
 He half a bussiel / of hir flour hath take
 And bad his wyf / go knede it in [a] cake
 He seyde / I trowe the clerkes were aferd
 Yet kan a Millere / make a clerkes berd 4096

ffor al his Art' now lat hem goon hir weye
 Lo wher they goon / ye lat the children pleye
 They gete hym nat so lightly / by my croun
 ¶ Thise sely clerkes / rennen vp and doun 4100
 With keepe / keepe / stand' / stand' / Iossa warderere
 Ga whistle thou / and I shal kepe hym heere
 But' shortly / til that it was verray nyght'
 They koude nat / though they do al hir myght' 4104
 Hir capul cacche / he ran alwey so faste
 Til in a dych / they caughte hym atte laste
 Wery and weet' as beest is in the reyn
 Comth sely Iohn / and with him comth Aleyn 4108
 Allas quod Iohn / the day that I was born
 Now are we dryue / til hethyng' and til scorn
 Oure corn is stoln / me wil vs fooles calle
 Bathe the wardeyn / and oure felawes alle 4112
 And namely / the Millere weylaway
 ¶ Thus pleyneth Iohn / as he gooth by the way
 Toward the Mille / and bayard in his hond'
 The Millere / sittynge / by the fyr he fond' 4116
 ffor it was nyght' and forther myghte they noght'
 But for the loue of god / they hym bisoght'
 Of herberwe and of ese / as for hir peny
 ¶ The Millere seyde agayn / if ther be eny 4120
 Swich as it is / yet shal ye haue youre part/
 Myn hous is streit' but ye han lerned Art'
 Ye konne by Argumentz / make a place [leaf 48, back]
 A myle brood / of twenty foot of space 4124
 Lat se now / if this place may suffice
 Or make it rowm with speche / as in youre gise
 N Ow Symond' / seyde Iohn / by seint Cutberd'
 Ay is thou myrie / and this is faire answerd' 4128
 I haue herd seyd / man sal taa / of twa thynges
 Slyk as he fyndes / or taa slyk as he brynges
 But specially / I pray thee hoost deere
 Get vs som mete and drynke / and make vs cheere 4132

And we wil payen / trewely atte fulle
 With empty hand / men may none haukes tulle
 Loo heere our siluer / redy for to spende
 ¶ This Millere / in to toun his doghter sende 4136
 for Ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos
 And boond hire hors / it sholde nat goon loos
 And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed
 With sheetes and with chalons / faire yspred 4140
 Noght from his owene bed / ten foot / or twelue
 His doghter hadde a bed / al by hir selue
 Right in the same chambre / by and by
 It myghte be no bet and cause why? 4144
 Ther was no rommer herberwe in the place
 They soupen / and they speke hem to solace
 And drynke euere / strong ale atte beste
 Aboute mydnyght wente they to reste 4148
 ¶ Wel hath this Millere vernysshed his heed
 fful pale he was for-dronken / and nat reed
 He yexeth / and he speketh / thurgh the nose
 As he were / on the quakke / or on the pose 4152
 To bedde he goth / and with hym goth his wyf
 As any Iay / she light was and Iolyf
 So was hir ioly whistle wel y-wet
 The Cradel / at hir beddes feet is set 4156
 To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke
 And whan þat dronken / al was in the crowke
 To bedde / went the doghter right anon
 To bedde wente Aleyn / and also Iohn 4160
 Ther nas na moore / hem neded no dwale
 This Millere / hath so wisely bibbed Ale
 That as an hors / he snorteth in his sleepe
 Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keepe 4164
 His wyf bar him a burdon a ful strong
 Men myghte hir rowtyng heere two furlong
 The wenche rowteth eek / par campaigne
 ¶ Aleyn the clerk / that herl this melodye 4168

He poked Iohn / and seyde slepestow
 Herdtow euere slyk / a sang er now
 Lo whilk a cowplyng' is ymel hem alle [leaf 49]
 A wilde fyr / vp on thair bodyes falle 4172
 Wha herkned euere / slyk a ferly thyng'
 Ye they sal haue / the flour of il endyng'
 This lange nyght / ther tydes me na reste
 But yet nafor / al sal be for the beste 4176
 ffor Iohn seyde he / als euere moot I thryue
 If þat I may / yon wenche wil I swyue
 Som esement' has lawe yshapen vs
 ffor Iohn / ther is a lawe / that says thus 4180
 That gif a man / in a point' be ygreued
 That in another / he sal be releued
 Oure corn is stohn / shortly is ne nay
 And we han had / an il fit al this day 4184
 And syn I sal haue neen amendement'
 Agayn my los / I wil haue esement'
 By God sale / it sal neen other bee
 ¶ This Iohn answerde / Alayn auyse thee 4188
 The Millere / is a perilous man he seyde
 And gif that he / out of his sleepe abreyde
 He myghte doon vs / bathe a vileynye
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / I count hym nat a flye 4192
 And vp he rist / and by the wenche he crepte
 This wenche lay vprighte / and faste slepte
 Til he so ny was / er she myghte espie
 That it had been / to late for to crie 4196
 And shortly for to seyn / they were aton
 Now play Aleyn / for I wol speke of Iohn
 This Iohn lith stille / a furlong wey or two
 And to hym self / he maketh routhe and wo 4200
 Allas quod he / this is a wikked Iape
 Now may I seyn / that I is but an Ape
 Yet has my felawe / som what for his harm
 He has / the Milleris doghter / in his Arm 4204

He aunted hym / and has his nedes sped
 And I lye / as a draf sek / in my bed
 And when this Iape is tald another day
 I sal been halde a daf a cokenay 4208
 I wil arise / and aunte it by my fayth
 Vnhardy is vnseely / thus men sayth
 And vp he roos / and softly he wente
 Vn to the cradel / and in his hand it hente 4212
 And baar it softe / vn to the beddes feet
 ¶ Soone after this / the wyf hir rowtyng leet
 And gan awake / and wente hire out to pisse
 And cam agayn / and gan hir cradel mysse 4216
 And groped heer and ther / but she foond noon
 Allas quod she / I hadde almoost mysgoon
 I hadde almoost goon / to the clerkes bed [leaf 49, back]
 Ey benedicite / thanne hadde I foule y-sped 4220
 And forth she gooth / til she the Cradel fond
 She gropeth / alwey forther with hir hond
 And foond the bed / and thoghte noght but good
 By cause / that the Cradel by it stood 4224
 And nyste wher she was / for it was derk
 But faire and wel / she creepe In to the clerk
 And lith ful stille / and wolde han caught a sleepe
 With-Inne a while / this Iohn the clerk vp leepe 4228
 And on this goode wyf / he leith on soore
 So myrie a fit hadde she nat ful yoore
 He priketh harde and soore / as he were mad
 This ioly lyf / han thise two clerkes lad 4232
 Til that the thridde cok / bigan to synge
 ¶ Aleyn wax wery / in the dawenyng
 ffor he had swonken / al the longe nyght
 And seyde / fare weel Malyne sweete wight 4236
 The day is come / I may no lenger byde
 But eueremo / wher so I go / or ryde
 I is thyn awen clerk swa haue I seel
 ¶ Now deere lemman quod she / go fareweel 4240

But er thou go / o thyng^t I wol thee telle
 Whan that thou wendest^t homward by the Melle
 Right at the entree / of the dore bihynde
 Thou shalt a Cake / of half a bussiel fynde 4244
 That was ymaked / of thyn owene mele
 Which that I heelp^e / my fader for to stele
 And goode lemman / god thee saue and kepe
 And with that word / almoost she gan to wepe 4248
 A leyn vp rist / and thoughte / er þat it daw^e
 I wol go crepen In / by my felawe
 And fond the Cradel / with his hand anon
 By God thoughte he / al wrang I haue mysгон 4252
 Myn heed is toty / of my swynk to nyght
 That maketh me / that I go nat aright
 I woot wel by the Cradel / I haue mysго
 Heere lith the Millere / and his wyf also 4256
 And forth he goth / a twenty deuel way
 Vn to the bed / ther as the Millere lay
 He wende have copen / by his felawe Iohn
 And by the Millere In he creepe anon 4260
 And caughte hym by the nekke / and softe he spak^t
 He seyde / thou Iohn / thou swynesheed awak
 ffor cristes saule / and heer a noble game
 ffor by that lord / that called is seint Iame 4264
 As I haue thries / in this shorte nyght/
 Swyued the Milleres doghter bolt vpright^t
 Whil thou hast^t as a Coward been agast [leaf 50]
 ¶ Ye false harlot^t quod the Millere hast^t? 4268
 A false traitour / false clerk / quod he
 Thou shalt be deed / by goddes dignitee
 Who dorste be so boold / to disparage
 My doghter / that is come / of swich lynage 4272
 And by the throte bolle / he caughte Alayn
 And he hente hym / despitously agayn
 And on the nose / he smoot^t hym with his fest^t
 Doun ran the bloody streem / vp on his brest^t 4276

And in the floor / with nose and mouth to-broke
 They walwe / as doon two pigges in a poke
 And vp they goon / and doun agayn anon
 Til that the Millere / sporned at a stoon 4280
 And doun he fil / bakward vp on his wyf/
 That wiste no thyng / of this nyce stryf/
 ffor she was falle aslepe a lite wight
 With Iohn the clerk / that waked hadde al nyght 4284
 And with the fal / out of hir sleepe she breyde
 Help hooly croys of Bromholm / she seyde
 In manus tuas / lord to thee I calle
 Awak Symond / the feend is on vs falle 4288
 Myn herte is broken / help I nam but deed
 Ther lyth oon / vp on my wombe / and on myn heed
 Helpe Symkyn / for the false clerkes fighte
 ¶ This Iohn stirte vp / as soone as euer he myghte 4292
 And graspeth by the walles to and fro
 To fynde a staf / and she stirte vp also
 And knewe the Estres / bet than dide this Iohn
 And by the wal / a staf she foond anon 4296
 And saugh / a litel shymeryng of a light
 ffor at an hole / In shoon the moone bright
 And by that light she saugh hem bothe two
 But sikerly / she nyste / who was who 4300
 But as she saugh / a whit thyng in hir eye
 And whan she gan / the white thyng espye
 She wende the clerk hadde wered a volupeer
 And with the staf / she drough ay neer and neer 4304
 And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle
 And smoot the Millere / on the pyled skulle
 And doun he gooth / and cride harrow I dye
 Thise clerkes beete hym weel / and lete hym lye 4308
 And greythen hem / and tooke hir hors anon
 And eek hire mele / and on hir wey they gon
 And at the Mille / yet they tooke hir cake
 Of half a busschel flour / ful wel ybake 4312

124 GROUP A. § 6. REEVE'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

Thus is the proude Millere wel ybete
 And hath ylost / the gryndynge of the whete
 And payed for the soper euerideel [leaf 50, back]
 Of Aleyn and of Iohn / þat bette hym weel 4316
 His wyf is swyued / and his doghter als
 Lo swich it is / a Millere to be fals
 And therfore this prouerbe / is seyð ful sooth
 Hym thar nat wene wel / that yuele dooth 4320
 A gylour / shal hym self bigyled be
 And god / þat sitteth heighe in Trinitee
 Saue al this compaignye / grete and smale
 Thus have I quyt the Millere in my tale 4324
 ¶ Heere is ended the Reues tale

[Slight break in the MS.]

¶ The prologe of the Cokes Tale

The Cook of London / whil that the Reue spak
 ffor ioye him thoughte / he clawed him on the bak'
 Ha. ha. quod he / for cristes passion
 This Millere / hadde a sharpe conclusion 4328
 Vpon his argument / of herbergage
 Wel seyde Salomon / in his langage
 Ne brynge nat every man in-to thyn hous
 ffor herberwyng by nyghte is perilous 4332
 Wel oghte a man / auysed for to be
 Whom that he broghte / in-to his pryuetee
 I pray to god / so yeue me sorwe and care
 If euere sitthe / I highite Hogge of Ware 4336
 Herde I a Millere / bettre yset a werk
 He hadde a Iape of malice in the derk
 But god forbede / that we stynte heere^{hite}
 And therfore / if ye vouche-sauf to heere^{audire} 4340
 A tale of me / that am a poure man
 I wol yow telle / as wel as euere I kan
 A litel iape / that fil in oure Citee
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / and seide I graunte it thee 4344
 Now telle on Roger / looke that it be good
 ffor many a pastee / hastow laten blood
 And many a Iakke of Douere hastow soold
 That hath been / twies hoot and twies coold 4348
 Of many a pilgrym / hastow cristes curs
 ffor of thy percely / yet they fare the wors
 That they han eten / with thy stubbel goos
 ffor in thy shoppe / is many a flye loos 4352
 Now telle on / gentil Roger by thy name
 But yet I pray thee / be nat wroth for game
 A man may seye ful sooth / in game and pley (leaf 51)
 ¶ Thou seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey 4356



126 GROUP A. § 7. COOK'S PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

But sooth pley quaad pley / as the flemying seith
And ther-fore / Herry Bailly / by thy feith
Be thou na[t] wrooth / er we departen heer
Though that my tale / be of an Hostileer 4360
But nathelees / I wol nat telle it yit
But er we parte / ywis thou shalt be quit/
And ther with al / he lough and made cheere
And seyde his tale / as ye shul after heere 4364
[Slight break in the MS.]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Cookes tale

A Prentys whilom dwelled / in oure Citee
 And of a craft of vitailliers was hee
 Gaillard he was / as Goldfynch in the shawe
 Broun as a berye / a propre short fel[a]we 4368
 With lokkes blake / ykempd ful fetisly
 Dauncen he koude / so wel and iolily [painting of the Cook]
 That he was cleped Perkyn Reuelour
 He was / as ful of loue and paramour 4372
 As is the hyve / ful of hony sweets
 Wel was the wenche / with hym myghte meete
 At euery bridale / wolde he synge and hoppe
 He loved bet the Tauerne than the shoppe 4376
 ¶ ffor / whan ther / any ridyng was in Chepe
 Out of the shoppe / thider wolde he lepe
 Til that he hadde / al the sighte yseyn
 And daunced wel / he wolde nat come ayeyn 4380
 And gadered hym / a meynne of his sort
 To hoppe and synge / and maken swich disport
 And ther / they setten steuene for to meete
 To pleyen / at the dys in swich a streete 4384
 ffor in the toun / nas ther no prentys
 That fairer koude caste / a paire of dys
 Than Perkyn koude / and ther-to he was free
 Of his dispense / in place of pryuetee 4388
 That fond his maister wel in his chaffare
 ffor often tyme / he foond his box ful bare
 ffor sikerly / a prentys Reuelour
 That haunteth dys / Riot or paramour 4392
 His maister / shal it in his shoppe aby
 Al haue he / no part of the Mynstralcy
 ffor thefte and Riot. they been conuertible
 Al konne he pleye on gyterne / or Ribible 4396

128 GROUP A. § 8. COOK'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

Reuel and trouthe / as in a lowe degree [leaf 61, back]
 They been ful wrothe al day / as men may see
 ¶ This ioly prentys / with his maister bood
 Til he were ny / out of his prentishood 4400
 Al were he snybbed / bothe erly and late
 And somtyme / lad with reuel to Newegate
 But atte laste / his maister hym bithoghte
 Vp on a day / whan he his papir soghte 4404
 Of a prouerbe / that seith this same word
 Wel bet is roten Appul / out of hoord
 Than þat / it rotie al the remenaunt
 ¶ So fareth it by a riotous seruauñt 4408
 It is wel lasse harm / to lete hym pace
 Than he shende / alle the seruantz in the place
 Therfore / his maister / yaf hym Acquittance
 And bad hym go / with sorwe and with meschance 4412
 And thus this ioly prentys / hadde his leue
 Now lat hym riote al the nyght / or leue
 And for ther is no theef / with-oute a lowke
 That helpeth hym / to wasten and to sowke 4416
 Of that he brybe kan / or borwe may
 Anon he sente his bed / and his array
 Vn to a compier / of his owene [sort¹] [1 later hand]
 That louede dys / and Reuel and disport 4420
 And hadde a wyf / that heeld for contenance
 A shoppe / and swyued for hir sustenance

[22 lines & 1 leaf of the MS blank.]

[NOTICE—Inasmuch as, after the *Man of Law's Tale*, the order of the Tales in the *Ellesmere MS* differs from the right order of the Tales in which the *Six-Text* is to be arranged, the further issue of the separate Ellesmere Parts is suspended till all the Tales before the *Shipman's* in the Ellesmere MS have been issued in the *Six-Text*. Then the proper pagings of the separate Ellesmere sheets can be ascertained, and a large Part will be issued, bringing the separate issue abreast of the *Six-Text*. See the following scheme :—

<i>Six-Text</i>	<i>Ellesmere MS.</i>
rest of Group B { <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioress</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> <i>Monk</i> <i>Nun's Priest</i>	Group D { <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>
Group C { <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardoner</i>	Group E { <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i>
Group D { <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>	Group F { <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i>
Group E { <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i>	Group G { <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardoner</i>
Group F { <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i>	rest of Group B { <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioress</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> <i>Monk</i> <i>Nun's Priest</i>
Group G { <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i>	Group G { <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i>
Group H <i>Manciple</i>	Group H <i>Manciple</i>
Group I <i>Parson</i>	Group I <i>Parson</i>]

1 January, 1871.

W. E. L.

GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

§ 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ The wordes of the Hoost^r to the compaignye [leaf 55]

Ovre hoost saugh wel / that the brighte sonne
The ark^r of his artificial day hath ronne
The ferthe part^r and half an houre and moore
And though / he were nat depe ystert in loore 4
He wiste / it was the eighte and twentithe day
Of April^r / that is messenger to May
And saugh wel / that the shadwe of euery tree
Was as in lengthe / the same quantitee 8
That was the body erect^r that caused it
And ther fore / by the shadwe / he took his wit
That Phebus / which pat shoon / so clere and brighte
Degrees / was fyue and fourty clombe on highte 12
And for that day / as in that latitude
It was ten at the klokke / he gan conclude
And sodeynly / he plighte his hors aboute
¶ Lordynges quod he / I warne yow al this route 16
The fourthe party of this day is gon
Now for the loue of god / and of Seint Iohn
Leseth no tyme / as ferforth as ye may
Lordynges / the tyme wasteth nyght and day 20
And steleth from vs / what pryuely slepynge
And what thurgh necligence / in oure wakyng
As dooth the stream / that turneth neuere agayn
Descendynge fro the montaigne in to playn 24
¶ Wel kan Senec^r and many a philosophre
Biwaillen tyme / moore than gold in cofre
ffor losse of catel / may recouered be
But losse of tyme / shendeth vs quod he 28

It wol nat come agayn / with outen drede
 Namooore / than wole Malkynes maydenhede
 Whan she hath lost it in hir wantownesse
 Lat us nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse 32
 ¶ Sire man of lawe quod he / so haue ye blis
 Telle vs a tale anon / as forward is
 Ye been submytted / thurgh youre free assent
 To stonden in this cas / at my Iuggement 36
 Acquiteth yow now / of youre biheeste
 Thanne haue ye do youre deuoir atte leeste
 ¶ Hoost quod he / depardieux ich assente
 To breke forward / is nat myn entente 40
 Biheste is dette / and I wole holde fayn
 Al my biheste / I kan no better sayn
 ffor swich lawe / as a man yeueth another wight^[leaf 53, back]
 He sholde hym seluen / vseen it by right 44
 Thus wole oure text but nathelees certeyn
 I kan right now / no thrifty tale seyn
 That Chaucer / thogh he kan but lewedly
 On metres / and on rymyng craftily 48
 Hath seyde hem / in swich englissh / as he kan
 Of olde tyme / as knoweth many a man
 And if he haue noght seyde hem leue brother
 In o book / he hath seyde hem in another 52
 ffor he hath toold / of louteris vp and doun /
 Mo than Ouide / made of mencion
 In hise epistles / that been ful olde
 What sholde I telle hem / syn they ben tolde 56
 ¶ In youthe / he made / of Ceys and Alcione
 And sithe / hath he spoken of euerichone
 Thise noble wyues / and thise louteris eke
 Who so that wole / his large volume seke 60
 Cleped / the seintes legende of Cupide
 Ther may he seen / the large woundes wyde
 Of Lucesse / and of Babilan Tesbee
 The swerd of Dido / for the false Enee 64

GROUP B. § 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK. Ellesmere MS. 131

The tree of Phillis / for hire Demophon
 The pleinte of Diane / and of Hermyon
 Of Adriane / and of Isiphilee
 The bareyne yle / stondyng in the see 68
 The dreynte Leandre / for his Erro
 The teeris of Eleyne / and the wo
 Of Brixseyde / and the Ladomya
 The crueltee / of the queene Medea 72
 Thy litel children / hangyng by the hals
 ffor thy Iason / that was in loue so fals
 O Ypermystra / Penolopee / Alceste
 Youre wifhede / he comendeth with the beste 76
 ¶ But certainly no word ne writeth he
 Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee
 That loued / hir owene brother synfully
 Of swiche cursed stories / I sey fy 80
 Or ellis / of Tyro Appollonius
 How that the cursed kyng / Antiochus
 Brafte his doghter / of hir maydenhede
 That is / so horrible a tale for to rede 84
 Whan he hir threw / vp on the pauement
 And therfore he / of ful auysement
 Nolde neuere write / in none of his sermons
 Of swiche / vnkynde abhomynacions 88
 Ne I wol noon reherce / if that I may
 ¶ But of my tale / how shall I doon this day
 Me were looth / be likned doutelees [leaf 54]
 To Muses / that men clepe Pierides 92
 Methamorphosios / woot what I mene
 But nathelees / I recche noght a bene
 Though I come after hym / with hawebake
 I speke in prose / and lat him rymes make 96
 And with that word / he with a sobre cheere
 Bigan his tale / as ye shal after heere 98

¶ The prologe of the mannes tale of lawe

O hateful harm / condicion of pouerte 99
 With thurst with coold / with hunger so confoundid
 To asken help / thee shameth in thyn herte
 If thou noon aske / so soore artow ywoundid 102
 That verray nede / vnwrappeth al thy wounde hid
 Maugree thyn heed / thou most for Indigence
 Or stele / or begge / or borwe thy despence 105

Thow blamest crist and seist ful bitterly
 He mysdeparteth / richesse temporal
 Thy neighebores / thou wytest synfully
 And seist thou hast to lite / and he hath al 109
 Parfay seistow / somtyme he rekene shal
 Whan that his tayl / shal brennen in the gleede
 ffor he noght helpeth / needfulle / in hir neede 112

¶ Herke / what is the sentence of the wise
 Bet is to dyen / than haue Indigence
 Thy selue neighebor / wol thee despise
 If thou be poure / farwel thy reuerence 116
 Yet of the wise man / take this sentence
 Alle dayes of poure men been wikke
 Be war therfore / er thou come to that prikke 119

If thou be poure / thy brother hateth thee
 And alle thy freendes / fleen from thee allas
 O riche marchauntz / ful of wele been yee
 O noble / o prudent folk / as in this cas 123
 Youre bagges / been nat fild with ambes as
 But with sys cynk / that renneth for youre chaunce
 At Cristemasse / myrie may ye daunce 126

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. PROL. Ellesmere MS. 133

Ye seken lond and see / for yowre wynnynges [leaf 54, back]
 As wise folk ye knowen all thestaat'
 Of regnes / ye been fadres of tidynges
 And tales / bothe of pees / and of debaat' 130
 I were right now / of tales desolaat'
 Nere that a Marchant' goon is many a yeere
 Me taughte a tale / which that ye shal heere 133

As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.

l. 161. Europa est tercia pars mundi.

l. 197. ¶ Ceptra Phorenei fratrum fratrum discordia Thebe
 ¶ flammam Phetontis Deucalionis Aque ¶ In stellis Priami /
 species Audacia Turni ¶ Sensus Vlixus Hercules que vigor.
 [MS, leaf 55.]

l. 295. ¶ Vnde Ptholomeus. libro i°. capitulo. 8°. ¶ Primi motus
 celi duo sunt quorum vnus est qui mouet totum semper ab
 Oriente in Occidentem / vno modo super orbes &c. / Item al[i]ter
 vero motus est qui mouet orbem stellarum currencium contra mo-
 tum primum / videlicet / ab Occidente in Orientem super alios duos
 polos, &c. [MS, leaf 56, back.]

l. 309. ¶ Omnes concordati sunt / quod elecciones sint debiles
 nisi in diuitibus / habent enim isti licet debilitentur eorum elec-
 ciones radicem .i. natiuitates eorum que conforta[n]t omnem plane-
 tam debilem in itinere &c. [MS, leaf 56, back.]

l. 421. ¶ Nota de inopinato dolore ¶ Semper mundane leticie
 tristicia repentina succedit / Mundana igitur felicitas multis ama-
 ritudinibus est respersa / extrema gaudii luctus occupat. Audi ergo
 salubre consilium / In die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum.
 [MS, leaf 58.]

l. 771. ¶ Quid turpius ebrioso / cui fetor in ore tremor in cor-
 pore / qui promit stulta / prodit occulta / cuius mens alienatur /
 facies transformatur / nullum enim latet secretum vbi regnat
 ebrietas. [MS, leaf 62.]

l. 925. ¶ O extrema libidinis turpitudine que non solum mentem
 effeminat / set etiam corpus eneruat / semper sequitur dolor &
 penitentia post &cetera. [MS, leaf 64.]

l. 1182. ¶ A mane vsque ad vesperam mutabitur tempus /
 tenent tympanum & gaudent / ad sonum organi &cetera. [MS,
 leaf 66, back.]

l. 1135. ¶ Quis vnquam vnica[m] diem totam duxit / in sua
 dilectione iocundam quem in aliqua parte diei reatus conuincencie /
 vel impetus Ire vel motus concupiscencie non turbauerit / quem
 liuor Inuidie / vel Ardor Auaricie / vel tumor superbie non vex-
 auerit / quem aliqua iactura vel offensa / vel passio non com-
 mouerit &cetera. [MS, leaf 66, back.]

¶ Heere begynneth the man of lawe his tale

IN Surrye whilom dwelte a compaignye [Painting of the Man
of Law, on the left.]
 Of chapmen riche / and therto sadde and trewe
 That wyde where / senten hir spicerye
 Clothes of gold / and satyns riche of hewe 137
 Hir chaffare / was so thrifty and so newe
 That euery wight / hath deyntee to chaffare
 With hem / and eek / to sellen hem hire ware 140

Now fil it that the maistres / of that sort
 Han shapen hem / to Rome for to wende
 Were it for chapmanhode / or for disport
 Noon oother message / wolde they thider sende 144
 But comen hem self to Rome / this is the ende
 And in swich place / as thoughte hem auantage
 ffor hire entente / they take hir herbergage 147

¶ Soiourned han thise Marchantz / in that toun
 A certain tyme / as fil to hire plesance
 And so bifel / that the excellent renoun
 Of the Emperours doghter / Dame Custance 151
 Reported was / with euery circumstance
 Vn to thise Surryen Marchantz / in swich a wyse
 ffro day to day / as I shal yow deuyse 154

¶ This was the commune voys of every man
 Oure Emperour of Rome / god hym see
 A doghter hath / that syn the world bigan
 To rekene as wel / hir goodnesse as beautee 158
 Nas neuere / swich another as is shee
 I prey to god / in honour hire susteene
 And wolde she were / of all Europe the queene

[Latin note,
p. 133.]

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 135

In hire / is heigh beautee / with oute pride [leaf 55]
 Yowthe / with oute grenehede / or folye
 To alle hire werkes / vertu is hir gyde
 Humblesse / hath slayn in hire al tirannye 165
 She is Mirour / of alle curteisye
 Hir herte / is verray chambre of hoolynesse
 Hir hand / Ministre of fredam for almesse 168

And al this voys was sooth / as god is trewe
 But now to purpos / lat vs turne agayn
 Thise Marchantz / han doon fraught / hir shippes newe
 And whan they han / this blisful mayden sayn 172
 Hoom to Surrye / been they went ful fayn
 And doon hir nedes / as they han doon yoores
 And lyuen in wele / I kan sey yow namoore 175

¶ Now fil it that thise Marchantz / stode in grace
 Of hym / that was the Sowdan of Surrye
 ffor whan they cam / from any strange place
 He wolde / of his benigne curteisye 179
 Make hem good chiere / and bisily espye
 Tidynges / of sondry regnes for to leere
 The wondres / that they myghite seen or heere 182

Amonges othere thynges specially
 Thise Marchantz / han hym toold / of dame Custance
 So greet noblesse / in earnest ^{i. certene} ceriously
 That this Sowdan / hath caught so greet plesance 186
 To han hir figure / in his remembrance
 That all his lust and al his bisy cure
 Was for to loue hire / while his lyf may dure 189

Paraenture / in thilke large book/
 Which þat men clipe the heuene / ywriten was
 With sterres / whan that he his birthe took/
 That he for loue / sholde han his deeth allas 193

136 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

For in the sterres / clerer than is glas
Is writen god woot who so koude it rede
The deeth of euery man / withouten drede 196

In sterres many a wynter / ther biforn [Latin Note, p. 133.]
Was writen the deeth / of Ector / Achilles
Of Pompei Iulius / er they were born
The strif of Thebes / and of Ercules 200
Of Sampson / Turnus / and of Socrates
The deeth / but mennes wittes ben so dulle
That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle 203

¶ This Sowdan / for his priuee conseil sente [Leaf 55, back]
And shortly / of this matiere for to pace
He hath to hem / declared his entente
And seyde hem certain / but he myghte haue grace 207
To han Custance / with-Inne a litel space
He nas but deed / and charged hem in hye
To shapen for his lyf / som remedye 210

¶ Diuerse men / diuerse thynges seyden
They argumenten / casten vp and doun
Many a subtil resoun / forth they leyden
They speken of / Magyk and Abusioñ 214
But finally / as in conclusioñ
They kan nat seen / in that noon auantag
Ne in noon oother wey saue mariage 217

Thanne sawe they ther-Inne swich difficultee
By wey of reson / for to speke al playn
By cause / that ther was swich diuersitee
Bitwene hir bothe lawes / that they sayn 221
They trowe / þat no cristene prince wolde fayn
Wedden his child / vnder oure lawes sweete
That vs were taught by Mahoun oure prophete 224

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 137

¶ And he answerde / rather than I leese
 Custance / I wol be cristned doutelees
 I moot been hires / I may noon oother chese
 I prey yow / hoold youre argumentz in pees 228
 Saueth my lyf / and beth noght recchelees
 To geten hire / that hath my lyf in cure
 For in this wo / I may nat longe endure 231

¶ What nedeth / gretter dilatacion
 I seye / by tretys / and Embassadrie
 And by / the popes mediacion
 And al the chirche / and al the chivalrie 235
 That in destruccioñ of Maumetrie
 And in encroes / of cristes lawe deere
 They been acorded / so as ye shal heere 238

How that the sowdan / and his Baronage
 And alle hise liges / sholde ycristned be
 And he shal han / Custance / in mariage
 And certein gold / I noot what quantitee 242
 And heer to founden / sufficient suretee
 This same accord / was sworn on eyther syde
 Now faire Custance / almyghty god thee gyde 245

¶ Now wolde som men / waiten as I gesse [leaf 14]
 That I sholde tellen / al the purueiance
 That themperour / of his grete noblesse
 Hath shapen / for his doghter dame Custance 249
 Wel may men knowen / þat so greet ordinance
 May no man tellen / in a litel clause
 As was arrayed / for so heigh a cause 252

Bisshopes been shapen / with hire for to wende
 Lordes / ladies / knyghtes of renoun
 And oother folk ynogh / this is thende
 And notified is / thurgh out the toun 256

138 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

That euery wight / with greet deuocioun
Sholde preyen crist that he this mariage
Receyue in gree / and spede this viage 259

¶ The day is comen / of hir departyng
I seye / the woful day fatal is come
That ther may be / no lenger taryng
But forthward they hem dressen / alle and some 263
Custance / þat was with sorwe al ouercome
fful pale arist and dresseth hire to wende
ffor wel she seeth / ther is noon oother ende 266

Allas / what wonder is it thogh she wepte
That shal be sent / to strange nacioñ
ffro freendes þat so tendrely hire kepte
And to be bounden / vnder subieccioñ 270
Of oon / she knoweth nat his condicioñ
Housbondes been alle goode / and han ben yoores
That knowen wyues / I dar say yow na moore 273

¶ ffader she seyde / thy wrecched child Custance
Thy yonge doghter / fostred vp so softe
And ye my mooder / my souerayn plesance
Ouer alle thyng out taken crist on lofte 277
Custance youre child / hire recomandeth ofte
Vn to your grace / for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I neuere / seen yow moore with eye 280

Allas / vn to the Barbre nacioñ
I moste goon / syn that it is youre wille
But crist that starf / for our sauacioñ
So yeue me grace / hise heestes to fulfille 284
I wrecche womman / no fors / though I spille
Wommen are born / to thraldom and penance
And to been / vnder mannes gouernance 287

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 139

¶ I trowe at Troye / whan Pirrus brak / the wal (not so, back)
 Or Ilion / brende Thebes the Citee
 Nat Rome / for the harm thurgh Hanybal
 That Romayns / hath venquysshed tymes thre 291
 Nas herd / swich tendre wepyng for pitee
 As in the chambre was for hire departyng
 But forth she moot wher so she wepe or synge 294

¶ O firste moeuyng / crueel firmament [Latin note, p. 132.]
 With thy diurnal sweigh / that crowdest ay
 And hurlest al / from Est til Occident
 That naturelly / wolde holde another way 298
 Thy crowdyng / set the heuene in swich array
 At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage
 That crueel Mars / hath slayn this mariage 301

Infortunat Ascendent tortuous
 Of which / the lord is helplees falle alas
 Out of his Angle / in to the derkeste hous
 O Mars / o Atazir / as in this cas 305
 O fieble Moone / vnhappy been thy paas
 Thou knytest thee / ther thou art nat receyued
 Ther thou were weel / fro thennes artow weyued 308

Imprudent Emperour / of Rome alas [Latin note, p. 132.]
 Was ther / no philosophre / in al thy toun
 Is no tyme bet than oother / in swich cas
 Of viage / is ther noon eleccion 312
 Namely / to folk / of heigh condicion
 Noght whan a roote / is of a burthe yknowe
 Allas / we been / to lewed or to slowe 315

¶ To shiþ is come / this woful faire mayde
 Solempnely / with euery circumstance
 Now Ihesu crist be with yow alle she sayde
 Ther nys namoore / but farewel / faire Custance 319

140 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

She peyneth hire / to make good contenance
And forth / I lete hire saille / in this manere
And turne I wole / agayn to my matere 322

¶ The mooder / of the Sowdan / welle of vices
Espied hath / hir sones pleyn entente
How he wol lete / hise olde sacrifices
And right anon / she for hir conseil sente 326
And they been come / to knowe what she mente
And whan assembled was / this folk' in feere
She sette hire down / and seyde as ye shal heere 329

¶ Lordes / she seyde / ye knowen euerichon [leaf 57]
How that my sone / in point is for to lete
The hooly lawes / of oure Alkaron
Yeuen by goddes message Makomete 333
But oon auow / to grete god I heete
The lyf shal rather / out of my body sterte
Than Makometes lawe / out of myn herte 336

What sholde vs tyden / of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our bodies and penance
And afterward / in helle to be drawe
ffor we reneyed / Mahoun oure creance 340
But lordes / wol ye maken assurance
As I shal seyn / assentyng to my loore
And I shal make vs sauf for eueremoore 343

¶ They sworn / and assenten euery man
To lyue with hire and dye / and by hire stonde
And euerich / in the beste wise he kan
To strengthen hire / shal alle hise frendes fonde 347
And she hath / this emprise ytake on honde
Which ye shal heren / that I shal deuyse
And to hem alle / she spak right in this wyse 350

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 141

¶ We shul first feyne vs / cristendom to take
 Coold water / shal nat greue vs but a lite
 And I shal / swiche a feeste and reuel make
 That as I trowe / I shal the Sowdan quite 354
 ffor thogh his wyf / be cristned neuer so white
 She shal haue nede / to wasshe away the rede
 Thogh she / a font ful water / with hire lede 357

O Sowdanesse / roote of Iniquitee ¶ Actor
 Virago / thou Semyrame the secounde
 O serpent / vnder femynyntee
 Lik to the serpent depe in helle ybounde 361
 O feyned womman / al that may confounde
 Vertu and Innocence / thurgh thy malice
 Is bred in thee / as nest of euery vice 364

O Sathan enuious / syn thilke day
 That thou were chaced from oure heritage
 Wel knowestow / to wommen the olde way
 Thou madest Eua / brynge vs in seruage 368
 Thou wolt fordoon / this cristen mariage
 Thyn Instrument so weylawey the while
 Makestow of wommen / whan thou wolt bigile 371

¶ This Sowdanesse / whom I thus blame and warye (¶ 37, 38)
 Leet priuely / hire conseil goon hire way
 What sholde I in this tale lenger tarye
 She rydeth to the Sowdan / on a day 375
 And seyde hym / that she wolde reneye hir lay
 And cristendom / of preestes handes fonge
 Repentyng hire / she hethen was so longe 378

Bisechyng hym / to doon hire that honour
 That she moste han / the cristen folk to feeste
 To plesen hem I wol do my labour
 The Sowdan seith / I wol doon at youre heeste 382

And knelynge / thanketh hire of that requeste
 So glad he was / he nyste what to seye
 She kiste hir sone / and hoome she gooth hir weye 385

¶ Explicit prima pars

¶ Sequitur pars secunda 𐀀

Arryued been / this cristen folk to londe
 In Surrye / with a greet solempne route
 And hastifliche / this Sowdan sente his sonde
 ffirst to his mooder / and all the regne aboute 389
 And seyde / his wyf was comen oute of doute
 And preyde hire / for to ryde agayn the queene
 The honour of his regne / to susteene 392

Greet was the prees / and riche was tharray
 Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere
 The mooder of the Sowdan / riche and gay
 Recyuth hire / with also glad a cheere 396
 As any mooder / myghte hir doghter deere
 And to the nexte Citee / ther bisyde
 A softe paas / selemplnely they ryde 399

¶ Noght trowe I / the triumphe of Iulius
 Of which / that Lucan maketh swich a boost
 Was roialler / or moore curius
 Than was thassemblee / of this blisful hoost 403
 But this scorpioun / this wikked goost
 The Sowdanesse / for all hire flaterynge
 Caste vnder this / ful mortally to styng 406

¶ The Sowdan comth hym self soone after this [leaf 56]
 So roially / that wonder is to telle
 And welcometh hire / with alle ioye and blis
 And thus / in murthe and ioye I lete hem dwelle 410

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 143

The fruyt of this matiere / is that I telle
 Whan tyme cam / men thoughte it for the beste
 The reuel stynte / and men goon to hir resta 413

¶ The tyme cam / this olde Sowdanesse
 Ordeyned hath this feeste / of which I tolde
 And to the feeste / cristen folk hem dresse
 In general / ye bothe yonge and olde 417
 Heere may men / feeste / and roialtee bihold
 And deyntees mo / than I kan yow deuyse
 But all to deere / they boghte it er they ryse 420

O sodeyn wo / that euere art successour [Latin note, p. 122.]
 To worldly blisse / spreynð with bitternesse
 The ende of the ioye / of oure worldly labour
 Wo occupieth / the fyn of oure gladnesse 424
 Herke this conseil / for thy sikernesse
 Vp on thy glade day / haue in thy mynde
 The vnwar wo / or harm þat comth bihynde 427

ffor soothly / for to tellen / at o word
 The sowdan / and the cristen everichone
 Been al tohewe / and stiked at the bord
 But it were oonly / dame Custance allone 431
 This olde Sowdanesse / cursed krone
 Hath with hir freendes / doon this cursed dede
 ffor she hir self / wolde all the contree lede 434

Ne was Surryen noon / that was conuerted
 That of the conseil / of the Sowdan woot
 That he nas al tohewe / er he astarted
 And Custance / han they take anon foot hoot 438
 And in a ship / all steerelees god woot
 They han hir set and biddeth hire lerne saillo
 Out of Surrye / agaynward to Ytaille 441

144 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS

A certein tresor / that she with hire ladde
 And sooth to seyn / vitaille greet plentee
 They han hire yeuen / and clothes eek she hadde
 And forth she sailleth / in the salte see 445
 O my Custance / ful of benignytee
 O Emperours yonge doghter deere
 He that is lord of ffortune be thy steere 448

She blesseth hire / and with ful pitous voys (leaf 58, back)
 Vn to the croys of Crist thus seyde she
 O cleere / o woful Auter / hooly croys
 Reed of the lambes blood / ful of pitee 452
 That wesshe the world / fro the olde Iniquitee
 Me fro the feend / and fro his clawes kepe
 That day / that I shal drenchen in the depe 455

Victorious tree / proteccioñ of trewe
 That oonly / worthy were for to bere
 The kyng of heuene / with his woundes newe
 The white lamb / þat hurt was with the spere 459
 flemere of feendes / out of hym and here
 On which / thy lymes / feithfully extenden
 Me helpe / and yif me myght / my lyf tamenden 462

¶ Yeres and dayes / fleteth this creature
 Thurghout the See of Grece / vn to the Strayte
 Of Marrok. as it was hire Auenture
 On many a sory meel / now may she bayte 466
 After hir deeth / ful often may she wayte
 Er that the wilde wawes / wol hire dryue
 Vn to the place / ther she shal arryue 469

Men myghten asken / why she was nat slayn
 Eek at the feeste / who myghte hir body saue
 And I answee / to that demande agayn
 Who saued danyel / in the horrible Caue 473

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 145

Ther euery wight saue he / maister and knaue
Was with the leon frete / er he asterte
No wight but god / that he bar in his herte 476

God liste to shewe / his wonderful myracle
In hire / for we sholde seen / his myghty werkis
Crist which that is / to euery harm triacle
By certeine meenes ofte / as knowen clerkis 480
Dooth thyng for certain ende / that ful derk is
To mannes wit / that for oure ignorance
Ne konne noght knowe / his prudent-purueiance 483

¶ Now sith she was nat / at the feeste yslawe
Who kepte hire / fro the drenchyng / in the see?
Who kepte Ionas / in the fisshes mawe
Til he / was spouted vp at Nynyuee? 487
Wel may men knowe / it was no wight but he
That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir drenchyng
With drye feet thurgh out the see passyng 490

¶ Who bad the foure spirites of tempest [leaf 50]
That power han / tanoyen lond and see
Bothe North and South / and also west and Est
Anoyeth neither / see / ne land ne tree 494
Soothly / the Comandour of that was he
That fro the tempest / ay this womman kepte
As wel / when she wook as whan she slepte 497

¶ Where myghte this womman / mete and drynke haue?
Thre yeer and moore / how lasteth hire vitaille?
Who fedde / the Egypcien Marie in the Caue?
Or in desert? no wight but crist / sanz faille 501
ffyue thousand folk / it was as greet meruaille
With loues fyue / and fisshes two to feede
God sente his foyson / at hir grete neede 504

¶ She dryueth forth / in to oure Occian
 Thurgh out oure wilde see / til atte laste
 Vnder an hoold / that nempnen I ne kan
 ffer in Northhumberlond / the wawe hire caste 508
 And in the sond / hir ship / stiked so faste
 That thennes wolde it noght of al a tyde
 The wyl of crist. was þat she sholde abyde 511

¶ The Constable of the Castel / down is fare
 To seen his wrak and al the ship he soghte
 And foond / this wery womman ful of care
 He foond also / the tresor þat she broghte 515
 In hir langage / mercy she bisoghte
 The lyf / out of hire body for to twynne
 Hire to deliuere / of wo / that she was Inne 518

A maner latyn corrupt / was hir speche
 But algates / ther by was she vnderstonde
 The Constable / whan hym lyst no lenger seche
 This woful womman / broghte he to the londe 522
 She kneleth down / and thanketh goddes sonde
 But what she was / she wolde no man seye
 ffor foul ne fair / thogh þat she sholde deye 525

She seyde / she was / so mazed in the see
 That she forgat hir mynde / by hir trouthe
 The Constable / hath of hire so greet pitee
 And eke his wyf / that they wepen for routhe 529
 She was so diligent with outen slouthe
 To serue and plesse / euerich in that place
 That alle hir louen / that looken in hir face 532

¶ This Constable / and dame Hermengylde his wyf / [1f 59, bk]
 Were payens / and that contree euery where
 But Hermengylde / loued hire right as hir lyf
 And Custance / hath so longe sojourned there 536

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 147

In orisons / with many a bitter teere
 Til Ihesu / hath conuerted / thurgh his grace
 Dame Hermengylde / Constablesse of that place 539

In al that lond / no cristen dorste route
 Alle cristen folk / been fled fro that contree
 Thurgh Payens / that conquereden al aboute
 The plagis of the North by land and see 543
 To Walys / fledde the Cristyanytee
 Of olde Britons / dwellynge in this Ile
 Ther was hir refut for the meene while 546

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled
 That ther nere somme / that in hir priuetois
 Honoured crist and hethen folk bigiled
 And ny the Castel / swiche ther dwelten three 550
 That oon of hem was blynd / and myghte nat see
 But it were / with thilke eyen of his mynde
 With whiche men seen / whan þat they ben blynde 553

Bright was the sonne / as in that someres day
 ffir which the Constable / and his wyf also
 And Custance / han ytake the righte way
 Toward the see / a furlong wey or two 557
 To pleyen / and to romen to romen¹ to and fro [¹ so]
 And in hir walk this blynde man they mette
 Croked and oold / with eyen faste yshette 560

In name of Crist cride this olde Briton
 Dame Hermengylde / yif me / my sighte agayn
 This lady / weex affrayed of the soun
 Lest that hir housbonde / shortly for to sayn 564
 Wolde hire / for Ihesu cristes loue han slayn
 Til Custance made hire boold / and bad hire wirche
 The wyl of Crist as doghter of his chirche 567

¶ The Constable / weex abashed of that aȝht
 And seyde / what amounteth all this fare
 Custance answerde / sire / it is cristes myȝht
 That helpeth folk / out of the feendes snare 571
 And so ferforth / she gan oure lay declare
 That she the Constable / er that it were eue
 Conuerteth / and on Crist maketh hym bileue 574

This Constable / was no thyng lord of this place (leaf 60)
 Of which I speke / ther he Custance fond
 But kepte it strongly many wyntres space
 Vnder Alla / kyng of al Northhumbrelond 578
 That was ful wys / and worthy of his hond
 Agayn the Scottes / as men may wel heere
 But turne I wole / agayn to my mateere 581

¶ Sathan / that euere vs waiteth to bigile
 Saugh of Custance / al hire perfeccioun
 And caste anon / how he myȝhte quite hir while
 And made a yong knyȝht / þat dwelte in that toun 585
 Loue hire so hote of foul affeccioun
 That verrailly / hym thoughte he sholde spille
 But he of hire myȝhte ones haue his wille 588

He woweth hire / but it auailleth noght/
 She wolde do no synne / by no weye
 And for despit he compassed in his thoght
 To maken hire / on shameful deeth to deye 592
 He wayteth / whan the Constable was awaye
 And pryuely / vp on a nyȝht he crepte
 In Hermengylde's chambre / whil she slepte 595

¶ Wery / for-waked / in hire orisoñs
 Slepeþ Custance / and Hermengylde also
 This knyȝht thurgh Sathans temptacioñs
 All softly / is to the bed ygo 599

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 149

And kitte the throte / of Hermengylde atwo
 And leyde the bloody knyf / by dame Custance
 And wente his wey / ther god yeue hym meschance 603

¶ Soone after / cometh this Constable hoom agayn
 And eek Alla / þat kyng was of that lond
 And saugh his wyf / despitously yslayn
 ffor which ful ofte he weep / and wroong his hond 606
 And in the bed / the bloody knyf he fond
 By Dame Custance / allas what myghte she seye
 For verray wo / hir wit was al aweye 609

¶ To kyng Alla / was toold al this meschance
 And eek the tyme / and where / and in what wise
 That in a shiþ / was founden dame Custance
 As heer biforn / that ye han herd deuyse 613
 The kynges herte / of pitee gan agryse
 Whan he saugh / so benigne a creature
 ffalle in disece / and in mysauenture 616

ffor as the lomb / toward his deeth is broght [leaf 66, back]
 So stant this Innocent bifore the kyng
 This false knyght þat hath this treson wroght
 Berth hire on hond / þat she hath doon thys thyng 620
 But nathelees / ther was greet moornyng
 Among the peple / and seyn / they kan nat gesse
 That she had doon / so greet a wikkednesse 623

ffor they / han seyn hire euere so vertuous
 And louynge Hermengylde / right as hir lyf/
 Of this baar witnesse / euerich in that hous
 Saue he / þat Hermengylde / slow with his knyf/ 627
 This gentil kyng / hath caught a greet motyf
 Of this witnesse / and thoghte he wolde enquire
 Depper in this / a trouthe for to lere 630

¶ Allas Custance / thou hast no champion
 Ne fighte kanstow noght so weylaway
 But he / that starf for our redempcion
 And boond Sathan / and yet lith ther he lay 634
 So be / thy stronge champion this day
 ffor but if crist open myracle kithe
 Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe 637

She sit hire doun on knees / and thus she sayde
 Immortal god / that sauedest Susanne
 ffor fals blame / and thou merciful mayde
 Mary I meene / doghter to Seint Anne 641
 Bifore whos child / Angeles synge Osanne
 If I be giltye / of this felonye
 My socour be / or ellis shal I dye 644

Have ye nat seyn / som tyme a pale face
 Among' a prees / of hym þat hath be lad
 Toward his deeth / wher as hym gat no grace
 And swich a colour / in his face hath had 648
 Men myghte knowe / his face that was bistad
 Amonges alle the faces / in that route
 So stant Custance / and looketh hire aboute 651

O Queenes / lyuyng in prosperitee
 Duchesses / and ladyes euerichone
 Haueth som routhe / on hire Aduersitee
 An Emperours doghter / stant allone 655
 She hath no wight / to whom to make hir mone
 O blood roial / that stondest in this drede
 ffer been thy freendes / at thy grete nede 658

This Alla kyng' hath swich compassioun [leaf 61]
 As gentil herte / is fulfild of pitee
 That from hise eyen / ran the water doun
 Now hastily / do fecche a book' quod he 662

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 151

And if this knyght wol sweren how þat she
 This womman slow / yet wol we vs auyse
 Whom þat we wole / that shal been our Iustise 665

A Briton book / written with Euangiles
 Was fet and on this book he swoor anon
 She gilty was / and in the meene whiles
 An hand hym smoot vpon the nekke boon 669
 That down he fil / atones as a stoon
 And bothe hise eyen / broste out of his face
 In sighte / of every body in that place 672

¶ A voys was herd / in general Audience
 And seyde thou hast desclaundred gilleles
 The doghter of hooly chirche / in heigh presence
 Thus hastou doon / and yet holde I my pees 676
 Of this meruaille / agast was al the prees
 As mazed folk they stoden euerichone
 for drede of wreche / saue Custance allone 679

¶ Greet was the drede / and eek the repentance
 Of hem / that hadden wronge suspicioñ
 Vpon / this sely Innocent Custance
 And for this miracle in conclusioñ 683
 And by Custances mediacioñ
 The kyng and many another in that place
 Conuerted was / thanked be cristes grace 686

¶ This false knyght was slayn for his vntrouthe
 By Iuggement of Alla hastify
 And yet Custance / hadde of his deeth greet routh
 And after this Ihesus of his mercy 690
 Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
 This hooly mayden / that is so bright and sheene
 And thus hath crist ymaad Custance a queene 693

152 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

But who was woful / if I shal nat lye
 Of this weddyng^r but Donegild^r and na mo
 The kynges mooder / ful of tirannye
 Hir thoughte / hir cursed herte brast atwo 697
 She wolde noght^r hir sone had do so
 Hir thoughte a despit^r that he sholde take
 So strange a creature vn to his make 700

¶ Me list nat of the chaf / or of the stree [leaf 61, back]
 Maken so long a tale / as of the corn
 What sholde I tellen / of the roialtee
 At mariages / or which cours goth biforn 704
 Who bloweth in the trumpe / or in an horn
 The fruyt^r of euery tale / is for to seye
 They ete / and drynke / and daunce / and synge and pleye

They goon to bedde / as it was skile and right^r
 ffor thogh þat wyues / be ful hooly thynges
 They moste take / in pacience at nyght^r
 Swiche manere necessities / as been plesynges 711
 To folk / þat han ywedded hem with rynges
 And leye a lite / hir hoolynesse aside
 As for the tyme / it may no bet bitide 714

On hire he gat^r a man¹ childe anon [1 altered from knaue.]
 And to a bisshoþ / and his Constable eke
 He took his wyf to kepe / whan he is gon
 To Scotlondward / his foomen for to seke 718
 Now faire Custance / that is so humble and meke
 So longe is goon with childe / til that stille
 She halt hire chambre / abidyng^r cristes wille 721

The tyme is come / a man¹ child she beer
 Mauricius at the fontstoon / they hym calle
 This Constable / dooth forth come a Messaȝeer
 And wroot vn to his kyng^r that cleped was Alle 725

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 153

How that this blisful tidynge is bifalle
 And othere tidynge / spedeful for to seye
 He taketh the lettre / and forth he gooth his weye 728

¶ This Messenger / to doon his auantage
 Vn to the kynges mooder rideth swithe
 And salueth hire ful faire in his langage
 Madame quod he / ye may be glad and blithe 732
 And thanketh god / an hundred thousand sithe
 My lady queene / hath child with outen doute
 To ioye and blisse / to al this regne aboute 735

Lo heere the lettres / seled of this thyng
 That I moot bere / with al the haste I may
 If ye wol aught vn to youre sone the kyng/
 I am youre seruant bothe nyght and day 739
 Donegild answerde / as now at this tyme nay
 But heere al nyght / I wol thou take thy reste
 To-morwe / wol I seye thee / what me leste 742

¶ This Messenger / drank sadly ale and wyn [leaf 63]
 And stolen were hise lettres pryuely
 Out of his box / whil he sleep as a swyn
 And countrefeted was ful subtilly 746
 Another lettre / wrought ful synfully
 Vn to the kyng direct of this mateere
 ffro his Constable / as ye shal after heere 749

The lettre spak the queene deliuered was
 Of so horrible a feendly creature
 That in the Castel / noon so hardy was
 That any while / dorste ther endure 753
 The mooder was an Elf by auenture
 Ycomen / by charmes / or by sorcerie
 And euerich / hateth hir compaignye 756



154 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

¶ Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre had sayn
But to no wight he tolde his sorwes soore
But of his owene hand / he wroot agayn
Wel come the sonde of crist for eueremoore 760
To me / that am now lerned in his loore
Lord / wel come be thy lust and thy plesance
My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce 763

Kepeth this child / al be it foul or feir
And eek my wyf / vn to myn hoom comynge
Crist whan hym list may sende me an heir
Moore agreeable than this / to my likynge 767
This lettre he seleth pryuely wepynge
Which to the Messenger / was take soone
And forth he gooth / ther is na moore to doone 770

O Messenger / fulfild of dronkenesse [Latin note, p. 133.]
Strong is thy breeth / thy lymes faltren ay
And thou biwreyst / alle secreenesse
Thy mynde is lorn / thou ianglest as a Iay 774
Thy face is turned / in a newe array
Ther dronkenesse / regneth in any route
Ther is no conseil hyd / with outen doute 777

O Donegild / I ne haue noon englissh digne
Vn to thy malice / and thy tirannye
And therefore / to the feend I thee resigne
Lat hym enditen / of thy traitorie 781
ffy mannysh fy / o nay by god I lye
ffy feendlych spirit for I dar wel telle
Thogh thou heere walke / thy spirit is in helle 784

¶ This Messenger / comth fro the kyng agayn [leaf 62, back]
And at the kynges moodres ¹ court he lighte ¹ [—¹ corrected.]
And she was / of this Messenger ful fayn
And plesed hym / in al that euer she myghite 788

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 155

He drank / and wel his girdel vnderpighte
 He slepeth / and he snoreth in his gyse
 All nyght til the sonne gan aryse 791

Eft were hise lettres stolen euerychon
 And countrefeted lettres / in this wyse
 The king¹ comandeth / his Constable anon [king later] 795
 Vp peyne of hangyng and on heigh Iuyse
 That he ne sholde / suffren in no wyse
 Custance / in with his Reawme for tabyde
 Thre dayes / and o quarter of a tyde 798

But in the same shiþ / as he hire fond
 Hire and hir yonge sone / and al hir geere
 He sholde putte / and croude hire fro the lond
 And chargen hire / she neuer eft coome theere 802
 O my Custance / wel may thy goost haue feere
 And slepyng in thy dreem / been in penance
 Whan Donegild / cast al this ordinance 805

¶ This Messenger / on morwe / whan he wook
 Vn to the Castel / halt the nexte way
 And to the Constable / he the lettre took
 And whan þat he / this pitous lettre say 809
 fful ofte he seyde / Allas and weylaway
 Lord crist quod he / how may this world endure
 So ful of synne / is many a creature 812

¶ O myghty god / if that it be thy wille
 Sith thou art rightful Iuge / how may it be
 That thou wolt suffren / Innocentz to spille
 And wikked folk / regnen in prosperitee 816
 O goode Custance / Allas so wo is me
 That I moot be thy tormentour or deye
 On shames deeth / ther is noon oother weye 819

¶ Wepen bothe yonge and olde / in al that place
 Whan þat the kyng' this cursed lettre sente
 And Custance / with a deedly pale face
 The ferthe day / toward the ship she wente 823
 But nathelees / she taketh in good entente
 The wyl of Crist' and knelynge on the Stronde
 She seyde lord / ay wel come be thy sonde 826

He that me kepte / fro the false blame [leaf 63]
 While I was / on the lond amonges yow
 He kan me kepe / from harm / and eek fro shame
 In salte see / al thogh I se noght how 830
 As strong as euere he was / he is yet now
 In hym triste I / and in his mooder deere
 That is to me / my seyl / and eek my steere 833

Hir litel child / lay wepyng' in hir arm
 And knelynge / pitously / to hym she seyde
 Pees litel sone / I wol do thee noon harm
 With that hir couerchief / ouer hir heed she breyde 837
 And ouer hise litel eyen / she it leyde
 And in hir Arm / she lulleth it ful faste
 And in to heuene / hire eyen vp she caste 840

¶ Mooder quod she / and mayde bright Marie
 Sooth is / that thurgh wommanes eggement'
 Man kynde was lorn / and damned ay to dye
 ffor which thy child / was on a croys yrent 844
 Thy blisful eyen / sawe al his torment'
 Thanne is ther / no comparison bitwene
 Thy wo / and any wo / man may sustene 847

Thow sawe thy child yslayn bifore thyne eyen
 And yet now / lyueth my child parfay
 Now lady bright / to whom alle woful cryen
 Thow glorie of wommanhede / thow faire may 851

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 157

Thow hauen of refūt brighte sterre of day
 Rewe on my child / that of thy gentillesse
 Ruest on euery reweful in distresse 854

¶ O litel child / allas what is thy gilt
 That neuere wroghtest synne / as yet pardee
 Why wil thyn harde fader / han thee spilt
 O mercy deere Constable quod she 858
 As lat my litel child / dwelle heer with thee
 And if thou darst nat sauē hym for blame
 Yet kys hym ones / in his fadres name 861

Ther with / she looked / bakward to the londe
 And seyde / fare wel housbonde routhelees
 And vp she rist / and walketh down the stronde
 Toward the Ship / hir folweth al the prees 865
 And euere she preyeth hire child / to holde his pees
 And taketh hir leue / and with an hooly entente
 She blissed hire / and in to ship she wente 868

Vitailed was the ship / it is no drede [leaf 63, back]
 Habundantly / for hire ful longe space
 And othere necessities / that sholde nede
 She hadde ynogh / heryed be goddes grace 872
 for wynd and weder / almyghty god purchase
 And brynge hire hoom / I kan no bettre seye
 But in the see / she dryueth forth hir weye 875

¶ Explicit secunda pars

¶ Sequitur pars tercia

Ala the kyng / comth hoom soone after this
 Vn to his Castel / of the which I tolde
 And asketh / where his wyf / and his child is
 The Constable / gan aboute his herte colde 879

158 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS

And pleynly / al the manere he hym tolde
 As ye han herd / I kan telle it no better
 And sheweth the kyng' his seel and his lettre 882

And seyde / lord / as ye comanded me
 Vp peyne of deeth / so haue I doon certein
 This Messager / tormented was til he
 Moste biknowe / and tellen plat and pleyn 886
 ffro nyght to nyght / in what place he had leyn
 And thus by wit / and sobtil enquerynge
 Ymaged was / by whom this harm gan sprynge 889

¶ The hand was knowe / that the lettre wroo'
 And all the venym / of this cursed dede
 But in what wise / certainly I noot
 Theffect is this / þat Alla out of drede 893
 His mooder slow / that may men pleynly rede
 ffor þat she traitoure was to hire ligeance
 Thus endeth olde Donegild' with meschance 896

The sorwe that this Alla / nyght and day
 Maketh for his wyf / and for his child also
 Ther is no tonge / that it telle may
 But now wol I / vn to Custance go 900
 That fleteth in the see / in peyne and wo
 ffyue yeer and moore / as liked cristes sonde
 Er that hir shiþ / approched vn to the londe 903

¶ Vnder an hethen Castel / atte laste [leaf 64]
 Of which the name / in my text noght I fynde
 Custance / and eek hir child / the see vp caste
 Almyghty god / that saued al mankynde 907
 Haue on Custance / and on hir child som mynde
 That fallen is / in hethen hand eft soone
 In point to spille / as I shal telle yow soone 910

¶ Down fro the Castel / comth ther many a wight
 To gauren on this ship / and on Custance
 But shortly / from the Castel / on a nyght
 The lordes styward / god yene him meschance 914
 A theef / that hadde reneyed oure creance
 Came in to the ship allone / and seyde he sholde
 Hir lemman be / wher so she wolde or nolde 917

¶ Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon
 Hir child cride / and she cride pitously
 But blisful Marie / heelp hire right anon
 ffor with hir struglyng wel and myghtily 921
 The theef fil ouer bord / al sodeynly
 And in the see / he dreynthe for vengeance
 And thus hath crist vnwemmed kept Custance 924

O foule lust of luxurie / lo thyn ende Auctor.
 Nat oonly / that thou feyntest mannes mynde [Latin note,
p. 133.]
 But verrailly / thou wolt his body shende
 Thende of thy werk' or of thy lustes blynde 928
 Is compleynyng' hou many oon may men fynde
 That noght for werk som tyme / but for thentente
 To doon this synne / been outhur slayn or shente 931

How may this wayke womman / han this strengthe
 Hire to defende / agayn this renegat'
 O Golias / vnmesurable of lengthe
 Hou myghte Dauid / make thee so maat' 935
 So yong' and of Armure so desolaat
 Hou dorste he looke / vp on thy dreful face
 Wel may men seen / it nas but goddes grace 938

Who yaf Iudith / corage or hardynesse
 To sleen hym Oloferne / in his tente
 And to deliueren / out of wrecchednesse
 The peple of god / I seye for this entente 942

That right as god / spirit of vigour sente
 To hem / and saued hem / out of meschance
 So sente he myghȝt and vigour to Custance 945

¶ fforth gooth hir shiþ / thurgh out the narwe mouth [11 64. bk]
 Of Iubaltare and Septe dryuynge alway
 Som tyme West and som tyme North and South
 And som tyme est ful many a wery day 949
 Til cristes mooder / blessed be she ay
 Hath shapen / thurgh hir endeles goodnesse
 To make an ende / of al hir heuynesse 952

N ow lat vs stynte / of Custance but a throwe
 And speke we / of the Romayn Emperour
 That out of Surrye / hath by lettres knowe
 The slaughtre of cristen folk / and dishonour 956
 Doon to his doghter / by a fals traytour
 I mene / the cursed wikked Sowdanesse
 That at the feeste / leet sleen both moore and lesse 959

ffor which this Emperour / hath sent anon
 His senatour / with roial ordinance
 And othere lordes / god woot many oon
 On Surryens / to taken heigh vengeance 963
 They brennen / sleen / and brynge hem to meschance
 Ful many a day / but shortly / this is thende
 Homward to Rome / they shapen hem to wende 966

¶ This senatour / repaireth with victorie
 To Rome ward saillynge ful Roially
 And mette the shiþ dryuynge / as seith the storie
 In which Custance / sit ful pitously 970
 No thyng knew he / what she was / ne why?
 She was in swich array / ne she nyl seye/
 Of hire estaat thogh she sholde deye 973

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 161

He bryngeth hire to Rome / and to his wyf/
 He yaf hire / and hir yonge sone also
 And with the senatour / she ladde hir lyf
 Thus kan oure lady / bryngen out of wo 977
 Woful Custance / and many another mo
 And longe tyme / dwelled she in that place
 In hooly werkes euere / as was hir grace 980

The senatours wyf / hir Aunte was
 But for all that she knew hire neuer the moore
 I wol no lenger / tarien in this cas
 But to kyng Alla / which I spake of yoore 984
 That wepeth for his wyf / and siketh soore
 I wol retourne / and lete I wol Custance
 Vnder / the Senatours gouernance 987

K yng Alla / which that hadde his mooder slayn [leaf 63]
 Vp on a day fil in swich repentance
 That if I / shortly / tellen shal and playn
 To Rome he comth / to receyuen his penance 991
 And putte hym / in the popes ordinance
 In heigh and logh / and Ihesu crist bisoghte
 floryeue / hise wikked werkes þat he wroghhte 994

¶ The fame anon / thurgh out the toun is born
 How Alla kyng / shal comen on pilgrimage
 By herbergeours / that wenten hym biforn
 ffor which / the Senatour / as was vsage 998
 Rood hym agayns / and many of his lynage
 As wel to shewen / his heighe magnificence
 As to doon / any kyng a reuerence 1001

¶ Greet cheere / dooth this noble Senatour
 To kyng Alla / and he to hym also
 Euerich of hem / dooth oother greet honour
 And so bifel / that in with a day or two 1005

164 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

I pray yow alle / my labour to relese
 I may nat telle hir wo / vn til to morwe
 I am so wery / for to speke of sorwe 1071

But finally / whan that the sothe is wist [leaf 66]
 That Alla giltles / was of hir wo
 I trowe / an hundred tymes / been they kist
 And swich a blisse / is ther bitwix hem two 1075
 That saue the ioye / that lasteth eueremo
 Ther is noon lyk / that any creature
 Hath seyn or / shal / whil þat the world may dure 1078

Tho preyde she hir housbonde mekely
 In relief / of hir longe pitous pyne
 That he wolde preye / hir fader specially
 That of his magestee / he wolde enclyne 1082
 To vouche sauf / som day with hym to dyne
 She preyde hym eek / he wolde by no weye
 Vn to hir fader / no word of hire seye 1085

¶ Som men wold seyn / how þat the child Maurice
 Dooth this Message / vn to this Emperour
 But as I gesse / Alla was nat so nyce
 To hym that was / of so souereyn honour 1089
 As he that is / of cristen folk the flour
 Sente any child / but it is bet to deeme
 He wente hym self / and so it may wel seeme 1092

¶ This Emperour / hath graunted gentilly
 To come to dyner / as he hym bisoughte
 And wel rede I / he looked bisily
 Vp on this child / and on his doghter thoghte 1096
 Alla goth to his In / and as him oghte
 Arrayed for this feste / in euery wise
 As ferforth / as his konnyng' may suffise 1099

GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS. 165

¶ The morwe cam / and Alla gan hym dresse
And eek his wyf / this Emperour to meete
And forth they ryde / in ioye and in gladnesse
And whan she saugh / hir fader in the strete 1103
She lighte down / and falleth hym to feete
ffader quod she / youre yonge child Custance
Is now ful clene / out of youre remembrance 1106

I am youre doghter / Custance quod she
That whilom / ye han sent / vn to Surrye
It am I fader / that in the salte see
Was put allone / and dampned for to dye 1110
Now goode fader / mercy I yow crye
Sende me namoore / vn to noon hethenesse
But thonketh my lord heere / of his kyndenesse 1113

¶ Who kan / the pitous ioye / tellen al [leaf 66, back]
Bitwixe hem thre / syn they been thus ymette
But of my tale / make an ende I shal
The day goth faste / I wol no lenger lette 1117
This glade folk / to dyner they hem sette
In ioye and blisse / at mete I lete hem dwelle
A thousand foold / wel moore than I kan telle 1120

¶ This child Maurice / was sithen Emperour
Maad by the pope / and lyued cristenly
To cristes chirche / he dide greet honour
But I lete all his storie passen by 1124
Of Custance / is my tale specially
In the olde Romane geestes / may men fynde
Maurices lyf / I bere it noght in mynde 1127

¶ This kyng Alla / whan he his tyme say
With his Custance / his hooly wyf so sweete
To Engelonð / been they come the righte way
Wher as they lyue / in ioye and in quiete 1131

166 GROUP B. § 2. MAN OF LAW'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

But litel while it lasteth / I yow heete [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
 Ioye of this world / for tyme wol nat abyde
 ffro day to nyght / it changeth as the tyde 1134

Who lyued euere / in swich delit o day [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
 That hym ne moeued / outhur conscience
 Or Ire / or talent^r or som kynnes affray
 Enuye / or pride / or passion / or offence 1138
 I ne seye but for this ende this sentence
 That litel while in ioye / or in plesance
 Lasteth the bliase of Alla with Custance 1141

ffor deeth / that taketh / of heigh and logh / his rente
 Whan passed was a yeer / euene as I gesse
 Out of this world / this kyng Alla he hente
 For whom / Custance / hath ful greet heuynesse 1145
 Now lat vs praye to god / his soule blesse
 And dame Custance / finally to seye
 Toward the toun of Rome / goth hir weye 1148

¶ To Rome is come / this hooly creature
 And fyndeth hire freendes / hoole and sounde
 Now is she scaped / al hire auenture
 And whan þat she / hir fader hath yfounde 1152
 Doun on hir knees / falleth she to grounde
 Wepyng for tendrenesse / in herte blithe
 She heryeth god / an hundred thousand sithe 1155

¶ In vertu / and hooly almus dede [*leaf 67*]
 They lyuen alle / and neuere a sonder wende
 Till deeth departed hem / this lyf they lede
 And fareth now weel / my tale is at an ende 1159
 Now Ihesu Crist that of his myght may sende
 Ioye after wo / gouerne vs in his grace
 And kepe vs alle / that been in this place Amen 𐀀 1162

¶ Heere endeth the talc / of the man of Lawe 𐀀

[*The Wife of Bath's Prologue follows in the MS.*]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS
OF THE
24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS,

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.

In this first issue, 1871, only 14 of the Cuts are given. The other 10 will follow in 1872. When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.





THE MILLERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.





THE KNYGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)



THE MILLERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.



THE KNIGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)



THE COOK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.



THE WYF OF BATHE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.



THE MAN OF LAWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.



THE FRERE.

Ellenmere MS, leaf 80, back.



THE SOMONOUR.
Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.



THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.



THE SHIPMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.



CHAUCER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, back.



THE MONK.
Ellenmore MS, leaf 173.



THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 183.

GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

§ 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

ELLESMERE MS.

[on leaf 67]

¶ The Prologe / of the Wyues tale of Bathe 12

Experience / though noon Auctoritee
 Were in this world / were right ynogh to me
 To speke of wo / that is in mariage
 ffor lordynges / sith I .xij. yeer was of Age 4
 Ythonked be god / that is eterne on lyue
 Housbondes at chirche dore I haue had fyue
 ffor I so ofte / haue ywedded bee
 And alle / were worthy men in hir degree 8
 But me was toold certeyn / nat longe agoon is
 That sith that Crist' ne wente neuere but onis
 To weddyng' in the Cane of Galilee
 By the same / ensample / thoughte me 12
 That I ne sholde / wedded be but ones
 Herkne eek / which a sharpe word for the nones
 Beside a welle / Ihesus god and man
 Spak / in repreue of the Samaritan 16
 Thou hast yhad / fyue housbondes quod he
 And that man / the which þat hath now thee
 Is noght thyn housbonde / thus seyde he certeyn
 What that he mente ther by / I kan nat seyn 20
 But þat I axe / why that the fifthe man
 Was noon housbonde to the samaritan
 How manye / myghte she haue in mariage
 Yet herde I neuere tellen in myn age
 15

¶ In Cane Galilee

12

¶ Qui enim semel
 iuit ad nupcias /
 docuit semel esse
 nubendum

16

¶ Non est ratiocinatio
 numerus
 diminutus

24

quia secundum
Paulum / Qui
habent vxores sic
sint tanquam non
habentes

¶ Crescite &
multiplicamini

¶ Si autem non
continent/
nubant/

¶ Quod si dormie-
rit vireius liberata
est/ cui vult nubat
in Domino

¶ Si acceperis
vxorem non
peccasti / et si
nupsit virgo
non peccauit/ set
hij qui domino se
vouerunt Ita
idem &c

¶ Melius est
nubere quam vri
¶ Lameth qui
primus intravit
bigamiam /
sanguinarius &
homicida est &c.

¶ Abraham
trigamus

¶ Iacob quadri-
gamus

Vpon this nombre diffinicioun

Men may deuyne / and glosen vp and doun

But wel I woot' expres with-oute lye

God bad vs / for to wexe and multiplye

That gentil text' kan I [wel] vnderstonde

Eek wel I woot' he seyde myn housbonde

Sholde lete fader and mooder / and take me

But of no nombre / mencion made he

Of bigamye / or of Octogamye

Why sholde men / speke of it vileynye

¶ Lo heere / the wise kyng' dann salomon

I trowe / he hadde wyues / mo than oon

As wolde god / it were leueful vn-to me

To be refreshed / half so ofte as he

Which yifte of God / hadde he / for alle hise wyuys

No man hath swich / þat in this world alyue is

God woot / this noble kyng' as to my wit

The firste nyght' had many a myrie fit

With ech of hem / so wel was hym on lyue

Yblessed be god / that I haue wedded fyue

Welcome the sixte / whan that euere he shal

ffor sothe / I wol nat kepe me chaast in al

Whan myn housbonde / is fro the world ygon

Som cristen man / shal wedde me anon

ffor thanne / thapostle seith / I am free

To wedde a goddes half' where ¹it liketh¹ me [¹on an erasure]

He seith / to be wedded / is no synne

Bet is / to be wedded / than to brynne

What rekketh me / thogh folk seye vileynye

Of shrewed lameth / and of bigamye

I woot wel / Abraham / was an hooly man

And Iacob eek' / as ferforth as I kan

And ech of hem / hadde wyues mo than two

And many another man Also

Whanne saugh ye euere / in [any] manere Age

That hye god / defended mariage

28

32

[leaf 67, back]

36

40

44

48

52

56

60

By expres word / I pray you telleth me	
Or where / comanded he virginitee	
I woot as wel as ye / it is no drede	
Whan thapostel / speketh of maydenhede	64
He seyde / that precept ther-of hadde he noon	
Men may conseil / a womman to been oon	
But conseillyng is nat comandement	
He putte it in oure owene Iuggement	68
ffor hadde god / comanded maydenhede	
Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng with the dede	
And certein / if ther were / no seed y-sowe	
Virginitee / wher-of thanne sholde it growe	72
Poul / ne dorste nat / comanden atte leeste	¶ Paulus de virginibus / preceptum non habeo / consilium autem do & ceteris
A thyng of which his maister yaf noon heeste	
The dart is set vp / of virginitee	
Cacche who so may / who renneth best lat see	76
¶ But this word / is nat taken of euery wight	¶ Inuitat ad curam tenet in manu virginittatis brauium qui potest capere / capiat & cetera
But ther / as god lust gyue it of his myght	
I woot wel / the Apostel was a mayde	
But natheles / thogh / that he wroot and sayde	80
He wolde / put euery wight / were swich as he	[leaf 68] ¶ Volo autem omnes homines esse sicut me ipsum
Al nys / but conseil to virginitee	
And for to been a wyf / he yaf me leue	
Of Indulgence / so it is no repreue	84
To wedde me / if my make dye	
With outen / excepcion of Bigamy	
Al were it good / no womman for to touche	¶ Bonus est homini / mulierem non tangere
He mente / as in his bed / or in his couche	88
ffor peril is / bothe fyr and tow tassemble	
Ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble	
This is al and som / that virginitee	
Moore profiteth / than weddyng / in freletee	92
ffreeltee clepe I / but if that he and she	
Wolde lede / al hir lyf in chastitee	
¶ I graunte it wel / I haue noon envie	
Thogh maydenhede preferre Bigamy	96

¶ Item viridiligite
vires verescendas

¶ Abyde quod she / my tale is nat bigonne
 Nay / thou shalt drynken of another tonne
 Er that I go / shal sauoure wors than Ale
 And whan þat I / haue toold forth my tale 172
 Of tribulacion / that is in mariage
 Of which / I am expert in al myn age
 This to seyn / my self haue been the whippe
 Than maystow chese / wheither thou wolt sippe 176
 Of that tonne / that I shal abroche [leaf 68]
 Be war of it / er thou to ny approche
 ffor I shal tell ensamples / mo than ten
 Who so / þat wol nat be war / by othere men 180
 By hym / shul othere men corrected be
 The same wordes / writeth Protholomee
 Rede it in his Almageste / and take it there
 ¶ Dame / I wolde praye / if youre wyl it were 184
 Seyde this Pardoner / as ye bigan
 Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man
 And teche vs yonge men / of youre praktike
 ¶ Gladly sires / sith it may yow like 188
 But yet I praye / to al this campaignye
 If that I speke / after my fantasye
 As taketh not agrief / that I seye
 ffor myn entente / is but for to pleye 192

¶ Bihoold how
this goode wyf /
serued hir .iiij.
firste housbondes
whiche were goode
olde men

NOW sire / now wol I telle forth my tale
 As euere / moote I drynken wyn or Ale
 I shal seye sooth / of the housbondes þat I hadde
 As thre of hem were goode / and two were badde 196
 The thre men / were goode / and riche / and olde
 Vnnethe / myghthe they / the statut holde

¶ Terephancas
quique
Athenientium /
vague hodie /
cicute sorbicioe
castrari

In which / that they were / bounden vn-to me
 Ye woot wel / what I meene of this pardee 200
 As help me god / I laughe whan I thynke
 How pitously / anyght I made hem swynke
 And by my fey / I tolde of it no stoor
 They had me yeuen hir gold / and hir tresoor 204

Me neded nat / do lenger diligence
 To wynne hir loue / or doon hem reuerence
 They loued me so wel / by god aboute
 That I ne tolde / no deyntee of hir loue 208
 A wys womman / wol sette hire euere in oon
 To gete hire loue / ther as she hath noon
 But sith I hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond
 And sith / they hadde / me yeuen all hir lond 212
 What sholde I taken heede / hem for to please
 But it were / for my profit and myn ese
 I sette hem so a werk / by my fey
 That many a nyght they songen weilawey 216
 The bacon / was nat fet for hem I trowe
 That som men han / in Essex at Dunmowe
 I gouerned hem / so wel after my lawe
 That ech of hem / was ful blisful and fawe 220
 To brynge me / gaye thynges / fro the ffayre
 They were ful glad / whan I spak to hem faire
 ffor god it woot / I chidde hem spitously
 ¶ Now herkneth / hou I baar me proprely 224
 Ye wise wyues / that kan vnderstonde [leaf 69, back]
 ¶ Thus shul ye speke / and beren hem on honde
 ffor half so boldely / kan ther no man
 Swere and lye / as kan a womman 228
 I sey nat this / by wyues þat been wyse
 But if it be / whan they hem mysauyse
 A wys wyf / if that she kan hir good
 Shal bere hym on hond / the Cow is wood 232
 And take witnesse / of hir owene mayde
 Of hir assent but herkneth how I sayde
 ¶ Sire olde kaynard / is this thyn array
 Why is / my neighebores wyf so gay 236
 She is honoured / ouer al ther she gooth
 I sitte at hoom / I haue no thrifty clooth
 What dostow / at my neighebores hous
 Is she so fair / artow so amorous 240



341 SIX-TEXT

174 GROUP D. § 1. WIFE'S PREAMBLE. Ellesmere MS.

What rowne ye with oure mayde benedicite
Sire olde lecchour / lat thy lapes be
And if I haue / a gossib or a freend
With-uten gilt thou chidest as a feend 244
If that I walke / or pleye vn-to his hous
Thou comest hoom / as dronken as a Mous
And prechest on thy bench / with yuel preef
Thou seist to me / it is a greet meschief 248
To wedde a poure womman for costage
And if she be riche / and of heigh parage
Thanne seistow / it is a tormentrie
To soffren hire pride / and hire malencolie 252
And if that she be fair / thou verray knaue
Thou seyst that euery holour wol hire haue
She may no while / in chastitee abyde
That is assailed / vp-on ech a syde 256
¶ Thou seyst that som folk / desiren vs / for richesse
Somme for oure shape / somme for oure fairnesse
And som / for she kan synge and daunce
And som for gentillesse / and som for daliaunce 260
Som for hir handes / and hir Armes smale
Thus goth al to the deuel / by thy tale
Thou seyst men may nat kepe a Castel wal
It may so longe / assailed been ouer al 264
¶ And if that she be foul / thou seist that she
Coueiteth euery man / that she may se
ffor as a spaynel / she wol on hym lepe
Til þat she fynde / som man hire to chepe 268
Ne noon so grey goos gooth in the lake
As seistow / wol been with-oute make
And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde
A thyng þat no man wole his thanks helde 272
Thus seistow lorel / whan thou goost to bedde [leaf 70]
And þat no wys man / nedeth for to wedde
Ne no man / that entendeth vn-to heuene
With wilde thonder dynt and firy leuene 276

Moote / thy welked nekke be to-broke
 ¶ Thow seyst that droppying houses / *and* eek smoke
 And chiding wyues / maken men to flee
 Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee 280
 What eyleth / swich an old man for to chide
 ¶ Thow seyst þat we wyues / wol oure vices hide
 Til we be fast and thanne we wol hem shewe
 Wel may that be / a *prouerbe* of a shrewe 284
 ¶ Thou seist þat Oxen / Asses / hors / and houndes
 They been assayd / at diuerse stoundes
 Bacyns / lauours / er that men hem bye
 Spoones and stooles / and al swich housbondrye 288
 And so been / pottes clothes / and array
 But folk of wyues / maken noon assay
 Til they be wedded / olde dotard shrewe
 Thanne seistow / we wol oure vices shewe 292
 ¶ Thou seist also / that it displeth me
 But if that thou / wolt preyse my beautee
 And but thou poure alwey / vp-on my face
 And clepe me faire dame in euery place 296
 And but thou make a feeste / on thilke day
 That I was born / and make me fressh *and* gay
 And but thou do / to my norice honour
 And to my chambrere / with-Inne my bour 300
 And to my fadres folk / and hise allyes
 Thus seistow / olde barel ful of lyes
 ¶ And yet of oure Apprentice / Iane kyn
 ffor his criske heer / shynynge as gold so fyn 304
 And for he squiereth me / bothe vp and down
 Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun
 I wol hym noght / thogh thou were deed tomorwe
 ¶ But tel me / why hydestow with sorwe 308
 The keyes of my cheste / away fro me
 It is my good / as wel as thyn *pardee*
 What wenestow / to make an ydiot of oure dame
 Now by that lord / that called is seint Iame 312

¶ Et procura
calamistratus
cetera

Thou shalt nat bothe / thogh thou were wood
 Be maister / of my body / and of my good
 That oon thou shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen
 What nedeth thee / of me / to enquire or spyen 316
 I trowe / thou woldest loke me in thy chiste
 Thou sholdest seye / wyf go wher thee liste
 Taak youre disport I wol leue no talys
 I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf dame Alys 320
 We loue no man / that taketh kepe / or charge [leaf 70, back]
 Wher that we goon / we wol ben at our large
 ¶ Of alle men / blessed moot he be
 The wise Astrologien / Daun Protholome 324
 That seith this prouerbe / in his Almageste
 Of alle men / his wysdom is the hyeste
 That rekketh neuere / who hath the world in honde
 By this prouerbe / thou shalt vnderstonde 328
 Haue thou ynogh / what thar thee recche or care
 How myrily / that othere folkes fare
 ffor certeyn / olde dotard by youre leue
 Ye shul haue queynte / right ynogh at eue 332
 He is to greet a nygard / that wolde werne
 A man / to lighte his candle at his lanterne
 He shal haue / neuer the lasse light pardee
 Haue thou ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee 336
 ¶ Thou seyst also / þat if we make vs gay
 With clothyng and with precious array
 That it is peril of oure chastitee
 And yet with sorwe / thou most enforce thee 340
 And seye thise wordes / in the Apostles name
 In habit maad / with chastitee and shame
 Ye wommen / shul apparaille yow quod he
 And noght in tressed heer / and gay perree 344
 As perles / ne with gold / ne clothes riche
 After thy text ne after thy Rubriche
 I wol nat wirche / as muchel as a gnat
 ¶ Thou seydest this / that I was lyk a Cat 348

¶ *Intra omnes
alior existit/
qui non curat in
culis manu sit
mundus*

¶ *similiter &
mulieres in
habitu ornato
cum verecundia &
castitate ornent
se / non in tortis
erinibus aut auro
aut margaritis
sive veste preciosa
& cetera / Hec
Paulus*

for who so wolde / senge a Cattes skyn
 Thanne wolde the Cat wel dwellen in his In
 And if the Cattes skyn / be slyk and gay
 She wol nat dwelle in house / half a day 352
 But forth she wole / er any day be dawed
 To shewe hir skyn / and goon a Caterwawed
 This is to seye / if I be gay sire shrewe
 I wol renne out / my borel for to shewe 356
 ¶ Sire olde fool / what eyleth thee to spyen
 Thogh thou preye Argus / with hise hundred eyen
 To be my wardecors / as he kan best/
 In feith / he shal nat kepe me but lest 360
 Yet koude I make his berd / so moot I thee
 ¶ Thou seydest eek / that ther been thynges thre
 The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe
 And þat no wight / may endure the ferthe 364
 O leue sire shrewe / Ihesu / shorte thy lyf /
 Yet prechestow / and seyst and hateful wyf
 Yrekened is / for oon of thise meschances
 Been ther none othere resemblances 368
 That ye may likne / youre parables to [leaf 71]
 But if / a sely wyf / be oon of tho
 ¶ Thou liknest wommenes loue to helle
 To bareyne lond / ther water may nat dwelle 372
 ¶ Thou liknest it also / to wilde fyr
 The moore it brenneth / the moore it hath desir
 To consumen euery thyng þat brent wole be
 Thou seyst. right as wormes shendeth a tree 376
 Right so a wyf / destroyeth hire housbond
 This knowe they / that been to wyues bonde
 L Ordynges / right thus / as ye haue vnderstonde
 Baar I stifly / myne olde housbondes on honde 380
 That thus they seyden / in hir dronkenesse
 And al was fals / but that I took witnesso
 On Ianekyn / and on my Nece also
 O lord / the payne I dide hem / and the wo 384

¶ etiam odiosa
 vxor si habeat
 virum bonum &
 cetera

¶ Amor illius
 inferno & arenti
 terre & incendio
 comparatur. Unde
 illud & cetera
 ¶ Infernus &
 amor mulieris &
 terra que non
 saciatur aqua &
 ignis non dicunt
 satis & cetera
 ¶ Sicut in ligno
 vermis ita perdet
 virum suum vxor
 ¶ Nemo melius
 scire potest / quid
 sit vxor vel
 mulier / nisi ille
 qui passus est /

fful giltles / by goddes sweete pyne
 ffor as an hors / I koude byte and whyne
 I koude pleyne / thogh I were in the gilt
 Or elles / often tyme / hadde I been spilt 388
 Who so comth first to Mille / first grynt
 I playned first / so was oure werre y-stynt
 They were ful glad / to excusen hem blyue
 Of thyng / of which they neuere agilte hir lyue 392
 ¶ Of wenchis / wolde I beren hym on honde
 Whan that for syk' vnnethes myghte he stonde
 Yet tikled it his herte / for that he
 Wende / þat I hadde of hym so greet chiertee 396
 I swoor / þat al my walkyng out by nyghte
 Was / for tespye wenchis þat he dighte
 Vnder that colour / hadde I many a myrthe
 ffor al swich thyng' was yeuen vs in oure byrthe 400
 Deceite / wepyng' spynnyng' god hath yeue
 To wommen kyndely / whil that they may lyue
 And thus / of o thyng' I auaunte me
 Atte ende / I hadde the bettre in ech degree 404
 By sleighte / or force / or by som maner thyng'
 As by continueel murmure or grucchyng'
 Namely / abedde / hadden they meschaunce
 Ther wolde I chide / and do hem no plesaunce 408
 I wolde / no lenger in the bed abyde
 If that I felte his Arm ouer my syde
 Til he / had maad / his raunson vn-to me
 Thanne wolde I suffre hym / do his nycetee 412
 And ther-fore / euery man / this tale I telle
 Wynne who so may / for al is for to selle
 With empty hand / men may none haukes lure
 ffor wynnyng' wolde I al his lust endure 416
 And make me / a feyned appetit/ [leaf 71, back]
 And yet' in bacon / hadde I neuere delit'
 That made me / that euere I wolde hem chide
 ffor thogh the pope / hadde seten hem biside 420

I wolde nat spare hem / at hir owene bord
 ffor by my trouthe / I quitte hem word for word
 As helpe me / verray god omnipotent
 Though I right now / sholde make my testament 424
 I ne owe hem nat a word / þat it nys quit
 I broghte it so aboute by my wit/
 That they moste yeue it vp / as for the beste
 Or elles / hadde we neuere been in rest 428
 ffor thogh he looked / as a wood leon
 Yet sholde he faille / of his conclusion
 ¶ Thanne wolde I seye / goode lief taak keepe
 How mekely / looketh Wilkyn oure sheepe 432
 Com neer my spouse / lat me ba thy cheke
 Ye sholde been / al pacient and meke
 And han / a sweete spiced conscience
 Sith ye so preche / of Iobes pacience 436
 Suffreth alwey / syn ye so wel kan preche
 And but ye do / certein we shal yow teche
 That it is fair / to haue a wyf in pees
 Oon of vs two / moste bowen doutelees 440
 And sith a man / is moore resonable
 Than womman is / ye moste been suffrable
 What eyleth yow / to grucche thus and grone
 Is it for ye wolde haue my queynte allone 444
 Wy taak it al / lo haue it euery deel
 Peter I shrewe yow / but ye loue it weel
 ffor if I wolde / selle my bele chose
 I koude walke / as fressh as is a rose 448
 But I wol kepe / it for youre owene tooth
 Ye be to blame / by god / I sey yow sooth
 ¶ Swiche manere wordes hadde we on honde
 Now wol I speken / of my fourthe housbonde 452
 My fourthe housbonde / was a reuelour
 This is to seyn / he hadde a paramour
 And I was yong and ful of ragerye
 Stibourne and strong and ioly as a pye 456

¶ Of the con-
 ditione of the
 fourthe hous-
 bonde of this
 gude wyf And
 how she serued
 hym

¶ Valerius. libro.
de capitulo 3^o ||
Metellius uxorem
suam / eo quod
vinum bibisset/
fuste percussam
interemit /

Wel koude I daunce / to an harpe smale
And synge ywis / as any nyghtyngale
¶ Whan I had dronke / a draughte of sweete wyn
Metellius / the foule cherl the swyn 460
That with a staf / birafte his wyf hire lyf
ffor she drank wyn / thogh I hadde been his wyf /
He sholde nat han daunted me fro drynke
And after wyn / on Venus moste I thynke 464
ffor al so siker / as cold engendreth hayl [leaf 72]
A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl
In wommen vinolent / is no defence
This knowen lecchours by experience 468
¶ But lord crist / whan that it remembreth me
Vp-on my yowthe / and on my Iolitee
It tikleth me / aboute myn herte roote
Vn-to this day / it dooth myn herte boote 472
That I haue had my world / as in my tyme
But Age alas / that al wole enuenyme
Hath me biraft / my beautee / and my pith
Lat go fare wel / the deuel go therwith 476
The flour is goon / ther is namoore to telle
The bren as I best kan / now moste I selle
But yet to be right myrie / wol I fonde
Now wol I tellen / of my fourthe housbonde 480
¶ I seye / I hadde in herte greet despit
That he / of any oother had delit
But he was quit by god / and by seint Ioce
I made hym / of the same wode a croce 484
Nat of my body / in no foul manere
But certein / I made folk swich cheere
That in his owene grece / I made hym frye
ffor Angre / and for verray Ialousye 488
By god / in erthe I was his purgatorie
ffor which I hope / his soule be in glorie
ffor god it woot he sat ful ofte and song /
¶ Whan þat his shoo / ful bitterly hym wrongt 492

Ther was no wight saue god and he þat wiste	
In many wise / how soore I hym twiste	
He deyde / whan I cam fro Ierusalem	
And lith ygraue / vnder the roode beem	496
Al is his tombe / noght so curyus	
As was the sepulcre / of hym Daryus	
Which that Appelles / wroghte subtilly	
It nys but wast to burye hym preciously	500
Lat hym fare wel / god yeue his soule reste	
He is now / in his graue / and in his cheste	
N ow / of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle	
God lete his soule / neuere come in helle	504
And yet was he to me / the mooste shrewe	
That feele I / on my ribbes al by rewe	
And euere shal / vn-to myn endyng day	
But in oure bed / he was / ful fresch and gay	508
And ther-with-al / so wel koude he me glose	
Whan that he wolde han my bele chose	
That thogh / he hadde me bet on euery bon	
He koude wynne / agayn my loue anon	512
I trowe I loued hym best for that he	[leaf 72, back]
Was of his loue / daungerous to me	
We wommen han / if that I shal nat lye	
In this matere / a queynte fantasye	516
Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly haue	
Ther after / wol we crie / al day and craue	
fforbede vs thyng and that desiren we	
Preesse on vs faste / and thanne wol we fle	520
With daunger / oute we al oure chaffare	
Greet prees at Market maketh deere ware	
And to greet cheepe / is holde at litel prys	
This knoweth / euery womman that is wys	524
¶ My fifthe housbonde / god his soule blesse	
Which þat I took for loue / and no richesse	
He som tyme / was a clerk of Oxenford	
And hadde left scole / and wente at hom to bor	528

¶ Appelles / fecit
mirabile opus in
tumulo Darij /
vnde in Alex-
andro. libro. 6.

¶ Of the ffith
housbonde of
this wyf / and
hou she bar hire
ayens hym

With my gossib / dwellynge in oure toun
 God haue hir soule / hir name was Alisoun
 She knew myn herte / and eek my priuete
 Bet than oure parisshe preest' as moot I thee 532
 To hire / biwreyed I / my conseil al
 for hadde myn housbonde / pissed on a wal
 Or doon a thyng' þat sholde han cost his lyf /
 To hire / and to another worthy wyf / 536
 And to my Nece / which þat I loued weel
 I wolde han toold / his conseil euery deel
 And so I dide / ful often god it woot'
 That made his face / ful often reed and hoot' 540
 for verray shame / and blamed hym self' for he '
 Had toold to me / so greet a pryuate
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones in a lente
 So often tymes / I to my gossyb wente 544
 for euere yet' I loued to be gay
 And for to walke / in March / Aueritt and May
 fro hous to hous / to heere sondry talys
 That Iankyn Clerk' and my gossyb dame Alys 548
 And I my self / in-to the feeldes wente
 Myn housbonde / was at London al the lente
 I hadde / the bettre leyser for to pleye
 And for to se / and eek' for to be seye 552
 Of lusty folk' what wiste I / wher my grace
 Was shapen for to be / or in what place
 Therefore / I made my visitaciōis
 To vigilies / and to processiōis 556
 To prechyng' eek' and to thise pilgrimages
 To pleyes of myracles / and to mariages
 And wered vpon / my gaye scarlet gytes
 Thise wormes / ne thise Motthes / ne thise mytes 560
 Vpon my peril / frete hem neuer a deel [leaf 73]
 And wostow why? for they were vsed weel
 N Ow wol I tellen forth / what happed me
 I seye / that in the feeldes walked we 564

Till trewely / we hadde swich daliance
 This clerk and I / that of my purueiance
 I spak to hym / and seyde hym / how þat he °
 If I were wydwe / sholde wedde me 568
 ffor certainly / I sey for no bobance
 Yet was I neuere / with-uten purueiance
 Of mariage / nof othere thynges eek
 I holde a Mouses herte / nat worth a leek/ 572
 That hath but oon hole / for to sterte to
 And if þat faille / thanne is al ydo
 ¶ I bar hym on honde / he hadde enchanted me
 My dame taughte me that soultitee 576
 And eek I seyde / I mette of hym al nyght
 He wolde han slayn me / as I lay vp right
 And al my bed / was ful of verray blood
 But yet I hope / that he shal do me good 580
 ffor blood / bitokeneth gold / as me was taught
 And al was fals / I dremed of it right naught
 But I folwed ay / my dammes loore
 As wel of this / as of othere thynges moore 584
 ¶ But now sire / lat me se / what I shal seyn
 A / ha / by god / I haue my tale ageyn
 ¶ Whan þat my fourthe housbonde / was on beere
 I weepe algate / and made sory cheere 588
 As wyues mooten / for it is vsage
 And with my couerchief / couered my visage
 But for þat I / was purueyed of a make
 I wepte but smal / and that I vndertake 592
 ¶ To chirche / was myn housbonde / born a morwe
 With neighebores / that for hym maden sorwe
 And Iankyn oure Clerk / was oon of tho
 As help me god / whan þat I saugh hym go 596
 After the beere / me thoughte he hadde a paire °
 Of legges / and of feet / so clene and faire
 That al myn herte / I yaf vn-to his hoold
 He was I trowe / a twenty wynter oold 600

¶ Mansor
Amphorison¹. 19.
¶ Cumque in
ascendente
fuerint infortunae
taurum notam in
facie pacietur || In
natiuitatibus
mullerum cum
fuerit ascendens
aliqua de domibus
Veneris / Marte
existente in eis /
vel e contrario erit
mulier impudica ||
Idem erit / si
nabuerit
caprisornum in
ascendente ||
He[c] Hermes in
libro fidacie Am-
phorise 240

And I was fourty / if I shal seye sooth
But yet I hadde alwey / a coltes tooth
Gat tothed I was / and that bicam me weel
I hadde the prente / of seint Venus seel 604
As help me god / I was a lusty oon
And faire and riche / and yong^t and wel bigon
And trewely / as myne housbondes tolde me
I hadde the beste Quonyam mygh^te be 608
ffor certes / I am al Venerien [leaf 73, back]
In feelynge / and myn herte is Marcien
Venus me yaf my lust^t my likerousnesse
And Mars yaf me / my sturdy hardynesse 612
Myn Ascendent was Taur and Mars ther-Inne
Allas / allas / þat euere loue was synne
I folwed ay / myn Inclinacioñ
By vertu / of my constellacioñ 616
That made me / I koude noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus / from a good felawe
Yet haue I / Martes Mark vp-on my face
And also / in another priuee place 620
ffor god so wys / be my sauacioñ
I ne loued neuere / by no discrecioñ
But euere / folwed myn appetit
Al were he / short^t or long^t or blak / or whit 624
I took no kepe / so that he liked me
How poore he was / ne eek / of what degree
¶ What sholde I seye / but at the Monthes ende
This ioly clerk / Iankyn þat was so hende 628
Hath wedded me / with greet solempnytee
And to hym yaf I / al the lond and fee
That euere / was me yeuen ther-bifoore
But afterward / repented me ful soore 632
He nolde suffre / nothyng of my list^t
By god / he smoot me ones on the lyst^t
ffor þat I rente / out of his book^t a leef /
That of the strook / myn ere wax al deef / 636

Stibourne I was / as is a Leonesse	
And of my tonge / a verray Iangleresse	
And walke I wolde / as I had doon biforn	640
ffrom hous to hous / al-though he had it sworn	
ffor which / he often tymes wolde preche	
And me / of olde Romayn geestes teche	
How he symplicius Gallus / lefte his wyf	¶ <i>Valerius. libro</i>
And hire forsook / for terme of al his lyf	644 <i>¶ folio. 19^o</i>
Noght but for open-heueded / he hir say	
Lokyng out at his dore / vpon a day	
¶ Another Romayn / tolde he me by name	
That for his wyf / was at a someres game	648
With-uten his wityng he forsook hire eke	
And thanne wolde he / vp-on his Bible seke	
That ilke prouerbe / of Ecclesiaste	
Where he comandeth / and forbedeth faste	652
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute	
Thanne wolde he seye right / thus / with-uten doute	
¶ Who so / that buyldeth his hous / al of salwes	¶ <i>Nota.</i>
And priketh his blynde hors / ouer the falwes	656
¶ And suffreth his wyf / to go seken halwes	[leaf 74] ¶ <i>Ne des mulieri</i>
Is worthy / to been hanged / on the galwes	<i>noquam ueniam</i>
But al for noght I sette noght an hawe	<i>prodeundi</i>
Of his prouerbes / nof his olde awe	<i>ecclesiastici .25^o</i>
Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be	[verse 23-6]
I hate hym / that my vices telleth me	
And so doo mo / god woot of vs / than I	
This made hym / with me wood al outrelly	664
I nolde noght / forbere hym in no cas	
¶ Now wol I seye yow sooth / by seint Thomas	
Why þat I rente / out of his book a leef	
ffor which / he smoot me so / þat I was deef	668
¶ He hadde a book / þat gladly nyght and day	
ffor his desport he wolde rede alway	
He cleped it Valerie / and Theofraste	
At which book / he lough alwey ful faste	672

	¶ And eek/ ther was som tyme / a clerk at Rome A Cardinal / that highte Seint Ierome That made a book ^t agayn Iouinian In which book ^t eek ^t ther was Tertulan	676
	Crisippus / Trotula / and Helowys That was Abbese / nat fer fro Parys And eek ^t the Parables of Salomon Ouides Art ^t and bookes many on	680
	And alle thise / were bounden / in o volume And euery nyght and day / was his custume Whan he hadde leyser / and vacacioñ ffrom oother / worldly / occupacioñ	684
	To reden on this book / of wikked wyues He knew of hem / mo legendes and lyues Than been / of goode wyues in the Bible . ffor trusteth wel / it is an impossible	688
	That any clerk ^t wol speke good of wyues But if it be / of hooly seintes lyues Ne noon oother womman / neuer the mo Who peynted the leon ^t / tel me who ?	692
¶ Quis pinxit leonem	By god / if wommen / hadde writen stories As clerkes han / with-Inne hire oratories They wolde han writen / of men moore wikkednesse Than all the mark/ of Adam may redresse	696
	The children / of Mercurie and Venus Been in hir wirkyng ^t ful contrarius Mercurie / loueth wysdam and science And Venus / loueth ryot ^t and dispence	700
	And for hire diuerse disposicioñ Ech falleth / in otheres exaltacioñ And thus god woot ^t Mercurie is desolat ^t In Pisces / wher Venus is exaltat ^t	704
¶ Vterque cedit vbi alia exaltatur	And Venus falleth / ther Mercurie is reysed ^t Therefore no womman / of no clerk is preyed The clerk ^t whan he is oold / and may nought do Of Venus werkes / worth his olde sho	[leaf 74, back] 708
¶ In libro Mansor primo Vniuersumque planetarum . 4 . Exaltacio illo in loco fore dicitur in quo subito		

Thanne sit he doun / and writ in his dotage

That wommen / kan nat kepe hir mariage

But now to purpos / why I tolde thee

That I was beten / for a book pardee

Vp-on a nyght Iankyn þat was oure sire

Redde on his book / as he sat by the fire

Of Eua first that for hir wikkednesse

Was al mankynde / broght to wrecchednesse

ffor which crist hym self / was slayn

That boghte vs / with his herte blood agayn

Lo heere expres / of womman may ye fynde

That womman / was the los / of al mankynde

¶ Tho redde he me / how Sampson loste hise heres

Slepyng / his lemman / kitte it with hir sheres

Thurgh which treson / loste he bothe hise eyen

¶ Tho redde he me / if that I shal nat lyen

Of Hercules / and of his Dianyre

That caused hym / to sette hymself afyre

¶ No thyng forgat he / the sorwe and wo

That Socrates / hadde with hise wyues two

How Xantippa / caste pisse vp-on his heed

This sely man / sat stille as he were deed

He wiped his heed / namoore dorste he seyn

But er þat thonder stynte / comth a reyn

¶ Of Phasifpha / that was the quene of Crete

ffor shrewednesse / hym thoughte the tale swete

ffy speke namoore / it is a grisly thyng

Of hire / horrible lust and hir likyng

¶ Of Clitermystra / for hire lecherye

That falsly / made hire housbonde for to dye

He redde it / with ful good deuocion

¶ He tolde me eek for what occasion

Amphiorax / at Thebes loste his lyf

Myn housbonde / hadde a legende of his wyf /

¶ Eriphilem / that for an Ouche of gold

Hath priuely / vn-to the grekes told

patitur ab alio
contrarium &
ceteris; Velut
Mercurius in
virgine que est
casus venaris II.
Alter, scilicet.
Mercurius
significat
scientiam &
philosophiam II.
Alter vero cantus
& alacritates &
quicquid est
sapiferum corpori

712

716

720

724

728

732

736

740

744

¶ Quid referam
Phasifphen /
Cliternistram &
Eriphilem /
quarum prima
delleija finens
quippe vt Regis
vux Tauri dicitur
aspetisse
conubitus. Alta
ocidisse virum
suum ob amorem
Adulteriij. ¶ Tercia
perdidisse
Amphiorax &
saluti viri
monile Aureum
pertulisse &c. ¶
Hec Metellius
Marro secundum
Valerium

When that hir housbonde / hidde hym in a place
 for which / he hadde at Thebes sory grace
 ¶ Of Lyma tolde he me / and of Lucye
 They bothe / made hir housbondes for to dye 748
 That oon for loue / that oother was for hate
 Lyma hir housbonde / vp-on an euen late
 Empeysoned hath / for þat she was his fo
 Lucia likerous / loued hire housbonde so 752
 That for he sholde / alwey vp-on hire thynke (leaf 75)
 She yaf hym / swich a manere loue drynke
 That he was deed / er it were by the morwe /
 And thus algates / housbondes han sorw 756
 ¶ Thanne tolde he me / how þat oon Latumyus
 Compleyned / vn-to his felawe Arrius
 That in his gardyn / growed swich a tree
 On which he seyde / how that hise wyues thre 760
 Hanged hem self for herte despitus
 ¶ O leue brother / quod this Arrius
 Yif me a plante / of thilke blissed tree
 And in my gardyn / planted it shal bee 764
 ¶ Of latter date of wyues / hath he red
 That somme / han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed
 And lete hir lecchour / dighte hire al the nyght
 When that the corps / lay in the floor vp right 768
 ¶ And somme / han dryue nayles / in hir brayn
 Whil þat they slepte / and thus they han hem slayn
 ¶ Somme han hem yeue / poysoun in hire drynke
 He spak moore harm / than herte may bithynke 772
 And ther-with-al / he knew of mo prouerbes
 Than in this world / ther growen gras or herbes
 Bet is quod he / thyn habitacioun
 Be with a leoun / or a foul dragoun 776
 Than with a womman / vsynge for to chyde
 Bet is quod he / hyc in the roof abyde
 Than with an angry wyf / down in the hous
 They been so wikked and contrarious 780

They haten / that hir housbondes / loueth ay
 He seyde / a womman cast hir shame away
 Whan she cast of hir smok' and forther mo
 A fair womman / but she be chaast also 784
 Is lyk a gold ryng' in a sowes nose
 Who wolde leue / or who wolde suppose
 The wo / that in myn herte was and pyn
 ¶ And whan I saugh / he wolde neuere fyne 788
 To reden on this cursed book al nyght
 Al sodeynly / thre leues haue I plyght
 Out of his book' right as he radde / and eke ,
 I with my fest' so took hym on the cheke 792
 That in oure fyr / he fil bakward adoun
 And he vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun
 And with his fest' he smoot me on the heed
 That in the floor / I lay / as I were deed 796
 And whan he saugh / how stille þat I lay
 He was agast' and wolde han fled his way
 Til atte laste / out of my swogh I breyde
 O hastow slayn me / false thief I seyde 800
 And for my land / thus hastow mordred me [leaf 75, back]
 Er I be deed / yet wol I kisse thee
 ¶ And neer he cam / and kneled faire adoun
 And seyde / deere suster Alisoun 804
 As help me god / I shal thee neuere smyte
 That I haue doon / it is thy self to wyte
 fforyeue it me / and that I thee biseke
 And yet eft soones / I hitte hym on the cheke 808
 And seyde thief / thus muchel am I wreke
 Now wol I dye / I may no lenger speke
 But atte laste / with muchel care and wo ✓
 We fille acorded / by vs seluen two 812
 He yaf me / al the bridel in myn hond
 To han the gouernance / of hous and lond
 And of his tonge / and his hond also
 And made hym brenne his book' anon right tho 816

¶ Circulus
 aureus in naribus
 Suis Mulier
 formosa & fatua
 .i. impudica

And whan that I / hadde gotten vn-to me
 By maistrie / al the soueraynetee
 And that he seyde / myn owene trewe wyf/
 Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf 820
 Keepes thyn honour / and keepes eek myn estaat/
 After that day / we hadden neuer debaat
 God helpe me so / I was to hym as kynde
 As any wyf from Denmark vn-to Ynde 824
 And also trewe / and so was he to me
 I prey to god / that sit in magestee
 So blesse his soule / for his *mercy* deere
 Now wol I seye my tale / if ye wol heere 828

¶ Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour / and the
 frere 𐀚

The frere lough / whan he hadde herd al this
 Now dame quod he / so haue I ioye or blis
 This is / a long preamble of a tale
 And whan the Somonour / herde the frere gale 832
 ¶ Lo quod the Somonour / goddes *Armes* two
 A frere / wol entremette him euere-mo
 Lo goode men / a flye and eek a frere
 Wol falle / in euery dyssh and mateere 836
 What spekestow / of preambulacioun
 What amble / or trotte / or pees / or go sit down
 Thou lettest oure disport in this manere
 ¶ Ye woltow so / sire Somonour quod the frere 840
 Now by my feith / I shal er that I go
 Telle of a Somonour / swich a tale or two
 That alle the folk / shal laughen in this place
 ¶ Now elles frere / I bishrewe thy face 844
 Quod this Somonour and I bishrewe me [leaf 7c]
 But if I telle tales / two or thre
 Of freres / er I come to Sidyngborne
 That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne 848

ffor wel I woot thy pacience is gon
 ¶ Oure hoost cride pees / and that anon
 And seyde / lat the womman telle hire tale
 Ye fare as folk / that dronken were of Ale 852
 Do dame / telle forth youre tale / and that is best
 ¶ Al redy sire quod she / right as yow lest
 If I haue licence / of this worthy frere
 ¶ Yis dame quod he / tel forth / and I wol heere 856
 ¶ Heere endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe /

And bigynneth hir tale

[on leaf 76]

IN tholde dayes / of Kyng Arthour
 Of which that Britons / speken greet honour
 All was this land / fulfild of flairye
 The Elf queene / with hir ioly compaignye 860
 Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede [Painting of the Wife
of Bath astride her
horse]
 This was the olde opinion as I rede
 I speke / of manye hundred yeres ago
 But now kan no man / se none Elues mo 864
 ffor now the grete charitee / and prayeres
 Of lymytours / and othere hooly freres
 That serchen / euery lond / and euery stream
 As thikke / as motes / in the sonne beam 868
 Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenes / boures
 Citees / Burghes / Castels / hye Toures
 Thropes / Bernes / Shipnes / dayeryes
 This maketh / that ther been no flairyres 872
 ffor ther as wont to walken was an Elf
 Ther walketh now / the lymytour hym self
 In vndermeles / and in morwenynges
 And seyth his matyns / and his hooly thynges 876
 As he gooth / in his lymytacioun
 Wommen / may go saufly vp and down
 In euery busshe / or vnder euery tree
 Ther is / noon oother Incubus / but he 880
 And he / ne wol doon hem / but dishonour
 ¶ And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour
 Hadde in hous / a lusty Bachelor
 That on a day / cam ridynge fro Ryuer 884

And happed that allone / as he was born
 He saugh a mayde / walkynge hym biforn
 Of which mayde / anon maugree hir heel [leaf 76, back]
 By verray force / biraftē hire maydenhed 888
 ffor which oppressiō / was swich clamour
 And swich pursute / vn-to the kyng Arthour
 That dampned was this knyght for to be deed
 By cours of lawe / and sholde han lost his heed 892
 Parauenture / swich was the statut tho
 But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo
 So longe preyden / the kyng of grace
 Til he / his lyf / hym graunted in the place 896
 And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille
 To chese / wheither/ she wolde hym saue or spille
 ¶ The queene / thanketh the kyng w^{ith} al hir myght
 And after this / thus spak she to the knyght 900
 Whan þat she saugh hir tyme vp-on a day
 Thou standest yet quod she / in swich array
 That of thy lyf / yet hastow no suretee
 I grante thee lyf / if thou kanst tellen me 904
 What thyng is it that wommen moost desiren
 Be war / and keepe thy nekke boon from Iren
 And if thou / kanst nat tellen it anon
 Yet shal I yeue thee leue / for to gon 908
 A twelf-month and a day / to seche and leere
 An answee suffisant in this mateere
 And suretee wol I han / er þat thou pace
 Thy body / for to yelden in this place 912
WO was this knyght and sorwefully he siketh
 But he may nat do / al as hym liketh
 And at the laste / he chees hym for to wende
 And come agayn / right at the yeres ende 916
 With swich answee / as god wolde hym purueye
 And taketh his leue / and wendeth forth his weye
 ¶ He seketh / euery hous / and euery place
 Where as he hopeth / for to fynde grace 920

To lerne / what thyng' wommen louen moost
 But he ne koude / arryuen in no coost'
 Wher as he myghte fynde / in this mateere
 Two creatures / accordynge in feere 924
 ¶ Somme seyde / wommen / louen best richesse
 Somme seyde honour / somme seyde Iolynesse
 Somme riche array / somme seyden lust abedd
 And ofte tyme / to be wydwe and wedde 928
 ¶ Somme seyde / þat oure hertes / been moost esed
 Whan that we been / yflatered and yplesed
 ¶ He gooth ful ny the sothe / I wol nat lye
 A man / shal wynne vs best' with flaterye 932
 And with attendance / and with bisynesse
 Been we ylymed / bothe moore and lesse
 ¶ And somme seyn / that we louen best' [leaf 77]
 ffor to be free / and do right as vs lest' 936
 And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice
 But seye þat we be wise / and no thyng nyce
 ffor trewely / ther is noon of vs alle
 If any wight / wol clawe vs on the galle 940
 That we nel kike / for he seith vs sooth
 Assay / and he shal fynde it þat so dooth
 ffor be we / neuer so vicious with-Inne
 We wol been holden wise / and clene of synne 944
 ¶ And somme seyn / that greet delit han we
 ffor to been holden stable / and eke secree
 And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle
 And nat biwreye thyng' that men vs telle 948
 But that tale / is nat worth a rake stele
 Pardee we wommen / konne no thyng' hele
 Witnesse on Myda / wol ye heere the tale
 ¶ Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale 952
 Seyde / Myda hadde vnder his longe heres
 Growynge vp-on his heed / two Asses eres
 The which vice he hydde / as he best myghte
 ful subtilly / from euery mannes sighte 956

That saue his wyf / ther wiste of it namo
 He loued hire moost and triste hire also
 He preyde hire / that to no creature
 She sholde tellen / of his disfigure 960
 ¶ She swoor him nay / for al this world to wynne
 She nolde do / that vileynye or synne
 To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name
 She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame 964
 But nathelees / hir thoughte þat she dyde
 That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
 Hir thoughte / it swal so soore / aboute hir herte
 That nedely / som word hire moste asterte 968
 And sith she dorste / telle it to no man
 Doun to a Mareys / faste by she ran
 Til she came there / her herte was a fyre
 And as a Bitore / bombleth in the Myre 972
 She leyde hir mouth / vn-to the water doun
 Biwreye me nat thou water with thy soun
 Quod she / to thee I telle it and namo
 Myn housbonde / hath longe Asses erys two 976
 Now is myn herte all hool / now is it oute
 I myghte no lenger / kepe it out of doute
 Heere may ye se / thogh we a tyme abyde
 Yet out it moot we kan no conseil hyde 980
 The remenant of the tale / if ye wol heere
 Redeth Ouyde / and ther ye may it leere
THIS knyght / of which / my tale is specially [leaf 77, back]
 Whan that he saugh / he myghte nat come therby
 This is to seye / what wommen loue moost 985
 With-Inne his brest ful sorweful was the goost
 But hoom he gooth / he myghte nat sojourne
 The day was come / þat homward moste he tourne 988
 And in his wey / it happed hym to ryde
 In al this care / vnder a fforest syde
 Wher as he saugh / vp-on a daunce go
 Of ladyes / foure and twenty / and yet mo 992

Toward the which daunce / he drow ful yerne
 In hope / that som wysdom / sholde he lerne
 But certeinly / er he came fully there
 Vanysshed was this daunce / he nyste where 996
 No creature saugh he / that bar lyf
 Saue on the grene / he saugh sittynge a wyf
 A fouler wight ther may no man deuyse
 Agayn the knyght this olde wyf gan ryse 1000
 And seyde sire knyght / heer forth ne lith no wey
 Tel me / what that ye seken / by youre fey
 Parauenture / it may the bettre be
 Thise olde folk kan muchel thyng quod she 1004
 ¶ My leue mooder / quod this knyght certeyn
 I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn
 What thyng it is / that wommen moost desire
 Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quite youre hire 1008
 ¶ Plight me thy trouthe / heere in myn hand quod she
 The nexte thyng that I requere thee
 Thou shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght
 And I wol telle it yow / er it be nyght 1012
 ¶ Haue heer my trouthe / quod the knyght I grante
 ¶ Thanne quod she / I dar me wel auante
 Thy lyf is sauf / for I wol stonde therby
 Vp-on my lyf / the queene wol seye as I 1016
 Lat se / which is the proudeste of hem alle
 That wereth on / a couerchief / or a calle
 That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche
 ¶ at vs go forth / with-uten lenger speche 1020
 Tho rowned she / a pistel in his ere
 And bad hym to be glad / and haue no fere
 ¶ Whan they be comen to the court / this knyght
 Seyde / he had holde his day / as he hadde hight 1024
 And redy was his answer / as he sayde
 ful many a noble wyf / and many a mayde
 And many a wydwe / for þat they been wise
 The queene hir-self sittynge as Iustise 1028

Assembled been / his answer for to heere
 And afterward / this knyght was bode appeere
 ¶ To every wight / comanded was silence [leaf 78]
 And that the knyght / shokle telle in Audience 1032
 What thyng that worldly wommen louen best
 This knyght ne stood nat stille / as doth a best
 But to his questioun / anon answerde
 With manly voys / that al the court it herde 1036
 ¶ My lige lady / generally / quod he
 Wommen desiren haue souereynete
 As wel / ouer hir housbond as hir loue
 And for to been / in maistrie hym aboue 1040
 This is youre mooste desir / thogh ye me kille
 Dooth as yow list I am at youre wille
 ¶ In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
 Ne wydwe / that contraried that he sayde 1044
 But seyden / he was worthy han his lyf
 ¶ And with that word / vp stirte the olde wyf
 Which that the knyght / saugh sittynge in the grene
 Mercy quod she my souereyn lady queene 1048
 Er that youre court departe / do me right
 I taughte this answer / vn-to the knyght
 ffor which / he plighte me his trouthe there
 The firste thyng I wolde hym requere 1052
 He wolde it do / if it lay in his myght
 Bifore the court / thanne preye I thee sir knyght
 Quod she / that thou me take vn-to thy wyf/
 ffor wel thou woost that I haue kept thy lyf 1056
 If I sey fals / sey nay vp-on thy fey
 ¶ This knyght answerde / allas and weylawey
 I woot right wel / that swich was my biheste
 ffor goddes loue / as chees a newe requeste 1060
 Taak al my good / and lat my body go
 ¶ Nay thanne quod she / I shrewe vs bothe two
 ffor thogh that I be foul / oold and poore
 I nolde for al the metal / ne for oore 1064

That vnder erthe is graue / or lith aboue
 But if thy wyf I were / and eek thy loue
 ¶ My loue quod he? nay my dampnacion
 Allas / that any of my nacion 1068
 Sholde euere so foule / disparaged be
 But al for noght thende is this / that he
 Constreyned was / he nedes moste hire wedde
 And taketh his olde wyf / and gooth to bedde 1072
 ¶ Now wolden som men / seye parauenture
 That for my negligence / I do no cure
 To tellen yow / the ioye / and al tharray
 That at the feeste was / that ilke day 1076
 To which thyng shortly answer I shal
 I seye / ther nas no ioye / ne feeste at al
 Ther nas but heynesse / and muche sorwe [leaf 78, back]
 for priuely / he wedded hire on a morwe 1080
 And al day after / hidde hym as an Owle
 So wo was hym / his wyf looked so foule
 ¶ Greet was the wo / the knyght hadde in his thoght
 Whan he was with his wyf abedde ybroght/ 1084
 He walweth / and he turneth to and fro
 His olde wyf / lay smyllynge eueremo
 And seyde / o deere housbonde benedicitee
 fiareth euery knyght / thus with his wyf / as ye? 1088
 Is this the lawe / of kyng Arthures hous?
 Is euery knyght of his so dangerous?
 I am youre owene loue / and youre wyf/
 I am she / which þat saued hath youre lyf/ 1092
 And certes / yet ne dide I yow neuere vnright/
 Why fare ye thus with me / this firste nyght/?
 Ye faren lyk a man / had lost his wit
 What is my gilt? for goddes loue tel it 1096
 And it shal been amended / if I may
 ¶ Amended quod this knyght? allas / nay / nay /
 It wol nat been amended neuere mo
 Thou art so loothly / and so oold also 1100

And ther-to comen / of so lough a kynde
 That litel wonder is / thogh I walwe and wynde
 So wolde god / myn herte wolde breste
 ¶ Is this quod she / the cause of youre vnreste? 1104
 ¶ Ye certainly quod he / no wonder is
 ¶ Now sire quod she / I koude amende al this
 If that me liste / er it were dayes thre
 So wel ye myghȝe / bere yow vn-to me 1108
Bvt for ye speken / of swich gentillesse ¶ *De generositate*
 As is descended / out of old richesse
 That therfore / sholden ye be gentil men
 Swich arrogance / is nat worth an hen 1112
 Looke / who that is / moost vertuous alway
 Pryuee and apert and moost entendeth ay
 To do / the gentil dedes that he kan
 Taak hym / for the grettest ¹gentil man¹ [*—1 later*] 1116
 Crist wole / we clayme of hym oure gentillesse
 Nat of oure eldres / for hire old richesse
 ffor thogh they yeue vs / al hir heritage
 ffor which we clayme / to been of heigh parage 1120
 Yet may they nat biquethe / for no thyng
 To noon of vs / hir vertuous lyuyng
 That made hem / gentil men ycalled be
 And bad vs / folwen hem in swich degree 1124
 ¶ Wel kan / the wise Poete of fflorence
 That highte Dant speken in this sentence
 ¶ Lo / in swich maner rym / is Dantes tale [*leaf 79*]
 fful selde vp riseth / by his branches smale 1128
 Prowesse of man / for god of his goodnesse
 Wole / that of hym / we clayme oure gentillesse
 ffor of oure eldres / may we no thyng clayme
 But temporel thyng^t þat man may hurte *and* mayme 1132
 ¶ Eek euery wight woot this as wel as I
 If gentillesse / were planted naturelly
 Vn-to a certeyn lynage / doun the lyne
 Pryuee nor apert thanne wolde they neuere tyne 1136

To doon of gentillesse / the faire office
 They myghte do / no vileynye or vice
 ¶ Taak fyr / and ber it in the derkeste hous
 Bitwix this / and the mount of Kaukasous 1140
 And lat men / shette the dores and go thenne
 Yet wole the fyr / as faire lye and brenne
 As twenty thousand men / myghte it biholde
 His office natureel / ay wol it holde 1144
 Vp peril of my lyf / til that it dye
 ¶ Heere may ye se wel / how þat genterye ¶ exemplum
 Is nat annexed to possession
 Sith folk / ne doon hir operacion 1148
 Alwey as dooth the fyr / lo in his kynde
 ffor god it woot men may wel often fynde
 A lordes sone / do shame and vileynye
 And he þat wole / han pris of his gentrye 1152
 ffor he was born / of a gentil hous
 And hadde hise eldres / noble and vertuous
 And nel hym seluen / do no gentil dedis
 Ne folwen his gentil Auncestre þat deed is 1156
 He nys nat gentil / be he duc or Erl
 ffor vileyns synful dedes / make a cherl
 ffor gentillesse / nys but renomee
 Of thyne auncestres / for hire heigh bountee 1160
 Which is a strange thyng to thy persone
 Thy gentillesse / cometh fro god allone
 Thanne comth / oure verray gentillesse of grace
 It was no thyng / biquethe vs with oure place 1164
 ¶ Thenketh hou noble / as seith Valerius
 Was thilke / Tullius Hostillius
 That out of pouerte / roos to heigh noblesse
 Reed senek / and redeth eek Boece 1168
 Ther shul ye seen expres / þat no drede is
 That he is gentil / that dooth gentil dedis
 And therefore leue housbonde / I thus conclude
 Al were it / that myne Auncestres weren rude 1172

Were in no book / ye gentils of honour
 Seyn / þat men sholde / an oold wight doon fauour
 And clepe hym fader / for youre gentillesse
 And Auctours / shal I fynden as I gesse 1212
Now ther ye sêye / þat I am foul and old ¶ De temptadine
 Than drede you noght / to been a Cokewold
 ffor filthe and eelde / al so moot I thee
 Been grete wardeyns / vp-on chastitee 1216
 But natheles / syn I knowe youre delit
 I shal fulfille / youre worldly appetit
 ¶ Chese now quod she / oon of thise thynges tweye
 To han me foul and old / til that I deye 1220
 And be to yow / a trewe humble wyf
 And neuere yow displese / in al my lyf
 Or elles / ye wol han me yong and fair [leaf 90]
 And take youre auenture / of the repair 1224
 That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me
 Or in som oother place / may wel be
 Now chese your seluen / wheither þat yow liketh
 ¶ This knyght auyseth hym and sore siketh 1228
 But atte laste / he seyde in this manere
 My lady and my loue / and wyf so deere
 I put me / in youre wise gouernance
 Cheseth youre self / which may be moost plesance 1232
 And moost honour / to yow and me also
 I do no fors / the wheither / of the two
 ffor as yow liketh / it suffiseth me
 ¶ Thanne haue I gete of yow / maistrie quod she 1236
 Syn I may chese / and gouerne as me lest
 ¶ Ye certes wyf quod he / I holde it best
 ¶ Kys me quod she / we be no lenger wrothe
 ffor by my trouthe / I wol be to yow bothe 1240
 This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good
 I prey to god / þat I moote steruen wood
 But I to yow / be al so good and trewe
 As euere was wyf / syn þat the world was newe 1244

And but I be tomorn / as fair to seene
 As any lady / Emperice or queene
 That is bitwixe the Est and eke the West
 Dooth with my lyf / and deth / right as yow lest 1248
 Cast vp the curtyn / looke how that it is
 ¶ And whan the knyght saugh verrailly al this
 That she so fair was / and so yong ther-to
 ffor ioye / he hente hire / in hise armes two 1252
 His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse
 A thousand tyme arewe / he gan hire kisse
 And she obeyed hym in euery thyng
 That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng 1256
 ¶ And thus they lyue / vn-to hir lyues ende
 In parfit ioye / and Ihesu crist vs sende
 Housbondes meeke / yonge / fressh a bedde
 And grace / touerbyde hem þat we wedde 1260
 And eek / I pray Ihesu shorte hir lyues
 That nat wol be gouerned by hir wyues
 And olde and angry nygardes of dispence
 God sende hem soone / verray pestilence 1264

¶ Heere endeth / the Wyues tale of Bathe ♡

¶ The prologe of the freres tale

[leaf 80, back]

THis worthy lymytour / this noble frere
 He made alwey / a maner louryng chiere
 Vpon the Somonour / but for honestee
 No vileyns word / as yet to hym spak ho 1268
 But atte laste / he seyde vn-to the wyf
 Dame quod he / god yeue yow right good lyf
 Ye han heer touched / al so moot I thee
 In scole matere / greet difficultee 1272
 Ye han seyd muche thyngt right wel I seye
 But dame / heere as we ryde by the weye
 Vs nedeth nat. to speken but of game
 And lete / auctoritees / on goddes name 1276
 To prechyngt and to scole of clergye
 And if it lyke / to this compaignye
 I wol yow / of a somonour telle a game
 Pardee / ye may wel knowe by the name 1280
 That of a Somonour / may no good be sayd
 I praye / þat noon of you / be yuele apayd
 A Somonour / is a rennere vp and doun
 With mandementz / for fornicacioun 1284
 And is y-bet at euery townes ende
 ¶ Oure hoost tho spak / a sire ye sholde be hende
 And curteys / as a man of youre estaat
 In compaignye / we wol haue no debaat 1288
 Telleth youre tale / and lat the Somonour be
 ¶ Nay quod the Somonour / lat hym seye to me
 What so hym list whan it comth to my lot
 By god / I shal hym quiten euery grot 1292
 I shal hym tellen / which a greet honour
 It is / to be a flaterynge lymytour
 And of many another manere cryme
 Which nedeth nat rehercen for this tyme 1296
 And his office / I shal hym telle ywis
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / pees namoore of this
 And after this / he seyde vn-to the frere
 Tel forth youre tale / leeue maister deere 1300

¶ Heere bigynneth the freres tale 𐝱

[Pointing of the Friar.] **W** Hilom ther was dwellynge / in my contree
 An Erchedekene / a man of heigh degree
 That boldely / dide execucioun
 In punysshynge / of fornicacioun 1304
 Of wicchecraft and eek of bawderye [leaf 81]
 Of diffamacioun / and Auowtrye
 Of chirche Reues / and of testamentz
 Of contractes / and eek of lakke of sacramentz 1308
 Of vsure / and of Symonye also
 But certes / lecchours dide he grettest wo
 They sholde syngen / if þat they were hent
 And smale tytheres / weren foule yshent 1312
 If any persone / wolde vp-on hem pleyne
 Ther myghte asterte hym / no pecunyal peyne
 ffor smale tithes / and smal offrynge
 He made the peple / pitously to synge 1316
 ffor er the bisshope / caughte hym with his hook
 They were in the Erchedeknes book /
 And thanne / hadde he / thurgh his Iurisliccion
 Power / to doon on hem correccion 1320
 He hadde a Somonour / redy to his hond
 A slyer boye / was noon in Engeland
 ffor subtilly / he hadde his espiaille
 That taughte hym / wher hym myghte auaille 1324
 He koude spare of lecchours / oon or two
 To techen hym / to foure and twenty mo
 ffor thogh this somonour / wood was as an hare
 To telle his harlotrye / I wol nat spare 1328

ffor we been / out of his correccioñ
 They han of vs no Iurisdiccioñ
 Ne neuere shullen / terme of hir lyues
 ¶ Peter / so been / wommen of the styves 1332
 Quod the Somonour / yput out of my cure
 ¶ Pees with myschance / and with mysauenture
 Thus seyde oure hoost and lat hym telle his tale
 Now telleth forth / thogh þat the somonour gale 1336
 Ne spareth nat / myn owene maister deere
 ¶ This false theef this Somonour quod the frere
 Hadde alwey / bawdes redy to his hond
 As any hauk to lure in Engelonð 1340
 That tolde hym / al the secree þat they knewe
 ffor hire acqueyntance / was nat come of newe
 They weren / hise approwours priuely
 He took hym self / a greet profit therby 1344
 His maister knew nat / alwey / what he wan
 With-uten mandement / a lewed man
 He koude somne / on peyne of Cristes curs
 And they were glade / for to fille his purs 1348
 And make hym / grete feestes atte nale
 And right as Iudas / hadde purses smale
 And was a theef right swich a theef was he
 His maister / hadde / but half his duetee 1352
 He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude [leaf 81, back]
 A theef / and eek / a Somnour / and a baude
 He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue
 That wheither / þat sir Robert or sir Huwo 1356
 Or Iakke / or Rauf / or who so þat it were
 That lay by hem / they tolde it in his ere
 ¶ Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent
 And he wolde fecche / a feyned mandement 1360
 And somne hem to the Chapitre bothe two
 And pile the man / and lete the wenche go
 ¶ Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake
 Do striken hire / out of oure lettres blake 1364

Thee thar namoore / as in this cas trouaille
 I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille
 Certeyn / he knew of bribryes mo
 Than possible is / to telle in yeres two 1368
 ffor in this world / nys dogge for the bowe
 That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe
 Bet / than this Somnour / knew a sly lecchour
 Or an Auowtier / or a paramour 1372
 And for that was / the fruyt of al his rente
 Therefore on it he sette al his entente
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones on a day
 This Somnour / euere waityng on his pray 1376
 ffor to somne an old wydwe a Ribibe
 ffeynynge a cause / for he wolde brybe
 Happed / that he saugh bifore hym ryde
 A gay yeman / vnder a fforest syde 1380
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and kene
 He hadde vp-on / a courtepy of grene
 An hat vp-on his heed / with frenges blake
 ¶ Sire quod this Somnour / hayl and wel atake 1384
 Wel come quod he / and euery good felawe
 Wher rydestow / vnder this grene wode shawe?
 Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day?
 ¶ This Somnour hym answerde / and seyde nay 1388
 Heere faste by quod he / is myn entente
 To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente
 That longeth / to my lordes ductee
 ¶ Artow thanne a bailly? Ye quod he / 1392
 He dorste nat for verray filthe and shame
 Seye þat he was a somonour / for the name
 ¶ Depardieux quod this yeman / deere broother
 Thou art a bailly / and I am another 1396
 I am vnknownen / as in this contree
 Of thyn aqueyntance / I wolde praye thee
 And eek of bretherhede / if þat yow leste
 I haue gold / and siluer in my cheste 1400

If that thee happe / to comen in oure shire [leaf 83]
 Al shal be thyn / right as thou wolt desire
 ¶ Grantmercy quod this Somonour / by my feith
 Euerych in ootheres hand / his trouthe leith 1404
 ffor to be sworn bretheren / til they deye
 In daliance / they ryden forth hir weye
 ¶ This Somonour / that was as ful of Iangles
 As ful of venym been thise waryangles 1408
 And euere enqueryng' vp-on euery thyng'
 Brother quod he / where is now youre dwellyng'
 Another day / if þat I sholde yow seche
 This yeman hym answerde / in softe speche 1412
 ¶ Brother quod he / fer in the North contree
 Where as I hope / som tyme I shal thee see
 Er we departe / I shal thee so wel wisse
 That of myn hous / ne shaltow neuere mysse 1416
 ¶ Now brother quod this Somonour / I yow preye
 Teche me / whil þat we ryden by the weye
 Syn þat ye been / a baillif as am I
 Som subtiltee / and tel me feithfully 1420
 In myn office / how I may moost wynne
 And spareth nat' for conscience ne synne
 But as my brother / tel me / how do ye
 ¶ Now by my trouthe / brother deere seyde he 1424
 As I shal tellen thee / a feithful tale
 My wages / been ful streite and ful smale
 My lord is hard to me / and daungerous
 And myn office / is ful laborous 1428
 And therefore / by extorcions I lyue
 ffor sothe / I take all that men wol me yeue
 Algate / by sleyghte / or by violence
 ffro yeer to yeer / I wynne al my dispence 1432
 I kan no bettre telle / feithfully
 ¶ Now certes quod this Somonour / so fare I
 I spare nat to taken / god it woot'
 But if it be / to heuy or to hoot' 1436

What I may gete / in conseil priuely
 No maner conscience / of that haue I
 Nere myn extorcioun / I myghte nat lyuer
 Nor of swiche lapes / wol I nat be shryuen 1440
 Stomak / ne conscience / ne knowe I noon
 I shrewe thise shrifte-fadres euerychoon
 Wel be we met by god / and by seint Iame
 But leue brother / tel me thanne thy name 1444
 Quod this somonour / in this meene while
 This yeman / gan a litel for to smyle
 ¶ Brother quod he / wiltow / þat I thee telle
 I am a feend / my dwellyng^r is in helle 1448
 And heere I ryde / aboute my purchasyng^r [leaf 82, back]
 To wite / wher men wolde me yeuen any thyng^r
 My purchas / is theeffect^r of al my rente
 Looke / how thou rydest^r for the same entente 1452
 To wyne good / thou rekkest neuere how
 Right so fare I / for ryde I wolde right now
 Vn-to the worldes ende / for a preye
 ¶ A quod this Somonour / benedicite what sey ye? 1456
 I wende / ye were a yeman trewely
 Ye han a mannes shape / as wel as I
 Han ye figure thanne determinat^r
 In helle / ther ye been in youre estat^r? 1460
 ¶ Nay certainly quod he / ther haue we noon
 But whan vs liketh / we kan take vs oon
 Or elles make yow some / we been shape
 Som tyme / lyk a man or lyk an Ape 1464
 Or lyk an Angel / kan I ryde or go
 It is no wonder thyng^r thogh it be so
 A lowy Iogelour / kan deceyue thee
 And pardee / yet kan I moore craft than he 1468
 ¶ Why quod the Somonour / ryde ye thanne or goon
 In sondry shape / and nat alwey in oon?
 ¶ ffor we quod he / wol vs swiche formes make
 As moost able is / oure preyes for to take 1472

¶ What maketh yow / to han al this labour
 ¶ fful many a cause / leue sire Somonour
 Seyde this feend / but alle thyng hath tyme
 The day is short and it is passed pryme 1476
 And yet ne wan I no-tyng in this day
 I wol entende / to wynnen if I may
 And nat entende / hir wittes to declare
 ffor brother myn / thy wit is al to bare 1480
 To ynderstonde / al-thogh I tolde hem thee
 But for thou axest why labouren we
 ffor som tyme / we been goddes Instrumentz
 And meenes / to doon hise comandementz 1484
 Whan that hym list vp-on his creatures
 In diuers art and in diuerse figures
 With-outen hym / we haue no myght certayn
 If that hym list to stonden ther agayn 1488
 And som tyme / at oure prayere / han we leue
 Only the body / and nat the soule greue
 Witnesse on Iob / whom that we diden wo
 And som tyme / han we myght of bothe two 1492
 This is to seyn / of soule and body eke
 And somtyme / be we suffred for to seke
 Vp-on a man / and doon his soule vnreste
 And nat his soule / and al is for the beste 1496
 Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun
 It is / cause / of his sauacioun
 Al be it that it was nat oure entente
 He sholde be sauf but þat we wolde hym hente 1500
 And som tyme / be we seruant vn-to man
 As to the Bisshope / Seint Dunstan
 And to the Apostles / seruant eek was .I.
 ¶ Yet tel me / quod the Somonour feithfully 1504
 Make ye yow newe bodies / thus alway
 Of Elementz? the feend answerde nay /
 Som tyme we feyne / and som tyme we aryse
 With dede bodies / in ful sondry wyse 1508

And speke as renably / and faire and wel
 As to the Phitonissa / dide Samuel
 And yet wol som men seye / it was nat he
 I do no fors / of youre dyuynytee 1512
 But o thyng warne I thee / I wol nat lape
 Thou wolt algates / wite how we been shape
 Thou shalt hereafterwardes / my brother deere
 Come there / thee nedeth nat of me to leere 1516
 ffor thou shalt by thyn owene experience
 Konne in a chayer / rede of this sentence
 Bet than Virgile / while he was on lyue
 Or Dant also / now lat vs ryde blyue 1520
 ffor I wole / holde compaignye with thee
 Til it be so / that thou forsake me
 ¶ Nay quod this Somonour / that shal nat bityde
 I am a yeman / knowen is ful wyde 1524
 My trouthe wol I holde / as in this cas
 ffor though thou were / the denel Sathanas
 My trouthe wol I holde / to my brother
 As I am sworn / and ech of vs til oother 1528
 ffor to be trewe brother / in this cas
 And bothe we goon / abouten oure purchas
 Taak thou thy part what þat men wol thee yeue
 And I shal myn / thus may we bothe lyue 1532
 And if þat any of vs / haue moore than oother
 Lat hym be trewe / and parte it with his brother
 ¶ I graunte quod the deuel / by my fey
 And with that word / they ryden forth hir wey 1536
 And right at the entryng of the townes ende
 To which this Somonour / shoope hym for to wende
 They saugh a Cart that charged was with hey
 Which þat a Cartere / droof forth in his wey 1540
 Deepe was the wey / for which the Carte stood
 The Cartere smoot and cryde / as he were wood
 Hayt Brok / hayt Scot what spare ye for the stones
 The feend quod he / yow fecche body and bones 1544

As ferforthly / as euere were ye foled [leaf 88, back]
 So muche wo / as I haue with yow tholed
 The deuel haue al / bothe hors and Cart and hey
 ¶ This Somonour seyde / heere shal we haue a pley 1548
 And neer the feend he drough / as noght ne were
 fful priuely / and rowned in his ere
 Herkne my brother / herkne by thy feith
 Herestow nat how þat the Carters seith 1552
 Hent it anon / for he hath yeue it thee
 Bothe hey and Cart and eek hise caples thre
 ¶ Nay quod the deuel / god woot neuer a deel
 It is nat his entente / trust thou me weel 1556
 Axe hym thy self if thou nat trowest me
 Or elles stynt a while / and thou shalt see
 ¶ This Carters / taketh his hors on the croupe
 And they bigonne drawen and to stoupe 1560
 Heyt now quod he / ther Ihesu crist yow blesse
 And al his handwerk bothe moore and lesse
 That was wel twight myn owene lyard boy
 I pray to god saue thee / and seint loy 1564
 Now is my Cart out of the slow pardee
 ¶ Lo brother quod the feend / what tolde I thee
 Heere may ye se / myn owene deere brother
 The carl spak oon / but he thoghte another 1568
 Lat vs go forth / abouten oure viage
 Heere / wyne I no thyng vp-on cariage
 ¶ Whan that they coomen / som-what out of towne
 This Somonour / to his brother gan to rowne 1572
 Brother quod he / heere woneth an old rebekke
 That hadde almoost as lief to lese hire nekke
 As for to yeue / a peny of hir good
 I wole han .xij. pens / though þat she be wood 1576
 Or I wol sompne hire / vn-to oure office
 And yet god woot of hire knowe I no vice
 But for thou kanst nat as in this contree
 Wynne thy cost taak heer ensample of me 1580

- ¶ This Somonour / clappeth at the wydwes gate
 Com out quod he / thou olde virytrate
 I trowe thou hast som frere / or preest with thee
 ¶ Who clappeth seyde this wyf benedicitee 1584
 God saue you sire / what is youre sweete wille?
 ¶ I haue quod he / of somonce a bille
 Vp-on peyne of cursyng' looke þat thou be
 Tomorn / bifore the Erchedeknes knee 1588
 Tanswere to the court of certeyn thynges
 ¶ Now lord quod she / crist Ihesu kyng of kynges
 So wisly helpe me / as I ne may
 I haue been syk / and that ful many a day 1592
 I may nat go so fer quod she ne ryde [leaf 86]
 But I be deed / so priketh it in my syde
 May I nat axe a libel / sire Somonour
 And answe're there / by my procutour 1596
 To swich thyng' as men wole opposen me?
 ¶ Yis quod this Somonour / pay anon lat se
 Twelf pens to me / and I wol thes acquite
 I shal no profit han ther-by / but lite 1600
 My maister hath the profit and nat I
 Com of / and lat me ryden hastily
 Yif me .xij. pens / I may no lenger tarye
 ¶ Twelf pens quod she /s now lady Seinte Marie 1604
 So wisly help me god / out of care and synne
 This wyde world / thogh þat I sholde wynne
 Ne haue I nat .xij. pens with-Inne myn hoold
 Ye knowen wel / that I am poure and oold 1608
 Kithe youre Almesse / on me poure wrecche
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / the foule feend me fecche
 If I thexcuse / though thou shul be spilt
 ¶ Allas quod she / god woot I haue no gilt 1612
 ¶ Pay me quod he / or by the sweete seinte Anne
 As I / wol bere away thy newe panne
 for dette / which that thou owest me of old
 Whan þat thou madest thyn housbonde cokewold 1616

I payde at hoom / for thy correccioun
 ¶ Thou lixt quod she / by my sauacioun
 Ne was I neuere er now / wydwe ne wyf
 Somoned vn-to youre court in al my lyf 1620
 Ne neuere I nas / but of my body trewe
 Vn-to the deuel / blak and rough of hewo
 Yeue I thy body / and my panne also
 ¶ And whan the deuel / herde hire cursen so 1624
 Vp-on hir knees / he seyde in this manere
 Now Mabely / myn owene moder deere
 Is this youre wyl / in earnest þat ye seye?
 ¶ The deuel quod she / so fecche hym er he deye 1628
 And panne and al / but he wol hym repente
 ¶ Nay olde Stot that is nat myn entente
 Quod this Somonour / for to repente me
 ffor any thyng that I haue had of thee 1632
 I wolde I hadde thy smok and euery clooth
 ¶ Now brother quod the deuel / be nat wrooth
 Thy body and this panne / been myne by right
 Thou shalt with me to helle / yet to-nyght 1636
 Where / thou shalt knowen / of oure priuete
 Moore / than a maister of dyuynyte
 And with that word / this foule feend hym hente
 Body and soule / he with the deuel wente 1640
 Where as that Somonours / han hir heritage [leaf 84, back]
 And god / þat made / after his ymage
 Mankynde / saue and gyde vs alle and some
 And leue thise Somonours / goode men bicom 1644
 L Orlynges / I koude han toold yow quod this frere
 Hadde I had leyser / for this Somnour heere
 After the text of Crist / Poul / and Ioħn
 And of oure othere doctours many oon 1648
 Swiche peynes / that youre herte myghte agryse
 Al be it so / no tonge may it deuyse
 Thogh þat I myghte / a thousand wynter telle
 The peynes / of thilke cursed hous of helle 1652

But for to kepe vs / fro that cursed place
 Waketh / and preyeth Ihesu for his grace
 So kepe vs / fro the temptour Sathanas
 Herketh this word / beth war/ as in this cas 1656
 The leoun sit in his awayt alway
 To sle the Innocent/ if that he may
 Disposeth ay / youre hertes to withstonde
 The feend / þat yow wolde make / thral and bonde 1660
 He may nat tempte yow / ouer youre myght
 for crist wol be / youre champion and knyght
 And prayeth / þat thise Somonours hem repente
 Of hir mysdedes / er þat the feend hem hente * 1664

¶ Heere endeth the ffreres tale ♪

¶ The prologe / of the Somonours tale ¶ [on leaf 84, back]

THis Somonour / in his Styropes hye stood
 Vp-on this frere / his herte was so wood
 That lyk an Aspen leef / he quook for Ire
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / but o thyng I desire 1668
 I yow biseke / that of youre curteisye
 Syn ye han herd / this false frere lye
 As suffereth me / I may my tale telle
 This frere bosteth / that he knoweth helle 1672
 And god it woot that it is litel wonder
 ffreres and feendes / been but lyte a-sonder
 ffor pardee / ye han ofte tyme herd telle
 How that a frere / vanysshed was to helle 1676
 In spirit ones / by a visioun
 And as an Angel / ladde hym vp and down
 To shewen hym / the peynes þat ther were
 In al the place / saugh he nat a frere 1680
 Of oother/ folk/ he saugh ynowe in wo [leaf 85]
 Vn-to this Angel / spak the frere tho
 ¶ Now sire quod he / han freres swich a grace
 That noon of hem / shal come to this place? 1684
 ¶ Yis quod this Angel / many a Millioun
 And vn-to Sathanas / he ladde hym down
 And now hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl
 Brodder/ than of a Carryk/ is the sayl 1688
 Hold vp thy tayl / thou Sathanas quod he
 Shewe forth thyn ers / and lat the frere se
 Where is the nest of freres / in this place
 And er/ þat half a furlong wey of space 1692

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GROUP D. § 5. FRIAR-SUMMONER LINK. Ellesmere MS. 217

Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue	
Out of the deueles ers / ther gonne dryue	
Twenty thousand freres / in a route	
And thurgh-out helle / swarmeden aboute	1696
And comen agayn / as faste as they may gon	
And in his ers / they crepten euerychon	
He clapte his tayl agayn / and lay ful stille	
This frere / whan he hadde looke al his fille	1700
Vpon the tormentz / of this sory place	
His spirit ^t god restored of his grace	
Vn-to his body agayn / and he awook ^t	
But natheles / for fere yet he quook ^t	1704
So was the deueles ers / ay in his mynde	
That is his heritage / of verray kynde	
God saue yow alle / saue this cursed frere	
My prologe / wol I ende / in this manere	1708

¶ Heere bigynneth the Somonour his tale ^(A)
[on leaf 86]

LOrdynge / ther is in yorkshire / as I gesse
 A merssh contree / called Holderneshe ^[Pointing of the Summoner]
 In which / ther wente a lymytour aboute
 To preche / and eek to begge / it is no doute 1712
 And so bifel / that on a day / this frere
 Hadde preched at a chirche in his manere
 And specially / abouen euery thyng/
 Excited he the peple / in his prechyng' 1716
 To trentals / and to yeue for goddes sake
 Wher-with / men myghte hooly houses make
 Ther as diuine seruyce is honoured
 Nat ther as it is wasted and deuoured 1720
 Ne ther it nedeth nat/ for to be yeue
 As to possessioners / that mowen lyue
 Thanked be god / in wele and habundaunce [leaf 86, back]
 Trentals seyde he / deliueren fro penaunce 1724
 Hir freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge
 Ye / whan þat they been hastily ysonge
 Nat for to holde a preest Ioly and gay
 He syngeth nat' but o masse in a day 1728
 Deliuereth out quod he / anon the soules
 fful hard it is / with flesschhook' or with oules
 To been yclawed / or to brenne or bake
 Now spede yow hastily / for cristes sake 1732
 And whan this frere / had seyde al his entente
 With / qui cum patre / forth his wey he wente
 ¶ Whan folk in chirche / had yeue him / what hem lest
 He went his wey / no lenger wolde he reste 1736

With scrippe and tipped staf/ ytukked hye
 In euery hous / he gan to poure and pryē
 And beggeth mele / and chese / or elles corn
 His felawe hadde a staf / tipped with horn 1740
 A peyre of tables / al of yuory
 And a poyntel / polysshed fetisly
 And wroote the names / alwey as he stood
 Of alle folk/ that yaf hym any good 1744
 Asaunces / that he wolde for hem prey
 Yif hym a busschel whete / Malt or Reye
 A goddes kechyl / or a troye of chese
 Or elles what yow lyst we may nat cheese 1748
 A goddes halfpeny / or a masse peny
 Or yif vs of youre brawn / if ye haue eny
 A dagon of youre blanket leue dame
 Oure suster deere / lo heere I write youre name 1752
 Bacon or beef/ or swich thyng as ye fynde
 ¶ A sturdy harlot/ wente ay hem bihynde
 That was hir hostes man / and bar a sak'
 And what men yaf hem / leyde it on his bak' 1756
 And whan þat he / was out at dore anon
 He planed away / the names euerichon
 That he biforn / had writen in his tables
 He serued hem / with nyfles and with fables 1760
 ¶ Nay ther thou list thou Somonour quod the frere
 ¶ Pees quod oure Hoost for cristes mooder deere
 Tel forth thy tale / and spare it nat at al
 ¶ So thryue I quod this Somonour / so I shal 1764
 ¶ So longe he wente hous by hous / til he
 Cam til an hous / ther he was wont to be
 Refresshed moore / than in an hundred placis
 Syk lay the goode man / whos the place is 1768
 Bedrede vp-on a couche lowe he lay
 Deus hic/ quod he / o Thomas freend good day
 Seyde this frere / curteisly and softe [leaf 66]
 Thomas quod he / god yelde yow / ful ofte 1772

Haue I / vp-on this bench / faren ful weal
 Heere haue I eten / many a myrie meel
 And fro the bench / he droof away the cat
 And leyde adoun / his potente and his hat 1776
 And eek his scrippe / and sette hym softe adoun
 His felawe / was go walked in-to toun
 forth with his knaue / in-to that hostelrye
 Where as he shoope hym / thilke nyght to lye 1780
 ¶ O deere maister / quod this sike man
 How han ye fare / sith þat March bigan^e
 I saugh yow noght / this fourtynyght or moore
 God woot quod he / laboured I haue ful soore 1784
 And specially / for thy sauacion
 Haue I seyð / many a precious orison
 And for oure othere freendes / god hem blesse
 I haue to day / been at youre chirche at messe / 1788
 And seyð a sermon / after my symple wit
 Nat al after / the text of hooly writ /
 ffor it is hard to yow / as I suppose
 And therefore / wol I teche yow al the glose 1792
 Glosyng / is a glorious thyng certeyn
 ffor lettre sleeth / so as thise clerkes seyn ¶ *Littera occidit*
 There haue I taught hem to be charitable & *ostera*
 And spende hir good / ther it is resonable 1796
 And there I saugh oure dame / a where is she?
 ¶ Yond in the yerd / I trowe þat she be
 Seyde this man / and she wol come anon
 ¶ Ey maister / wel come be ye / by seint Iohn 1800
 Seyde this wyf / how fare ye hertely?
 ¶ The frere ariseth vp ful curteisly
 And hire embraceth in his Armes narwe
 And kiste hire sweete / and chirteth as a sparwe 1804
 With his lypes / . dame quod he right weel^e
 As he / that is youre seruant euery deel
 Thanked be god / þat yow yaf soule and lyf
 Yet saugh I nat this day / so fair a wyf 1808

In al the chirche / god so saue me
 ¶ Ye / god amende defautes / sire quod sho
 Algates / wel come be ye / by my fey
 Graunt mercy dame / this haue I founde alwey 1812
 But of youre grete goodnesse / by youre leue
 I wolde prey yow / þat ye nat yow greue
 I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe
 Thise curatz / been ful negligent and alowe 1816
 To grope tandrely a conscience
 In shrift in prechyng' is my diligence
 And studie / in Petres wordes / and in Poules [leaf 86, back]
 I walke / and fissahe cristen mennes soules 1820
 To yelden Ihesu crist / his propre rente
 To sprede his word / is set al myn entente
 ¶ Now by youre leue / o deere sire quod sho
 Chideth him weel / for seinte Trinitee 1824
 He is as angry / as a pissemeyre
 Though þat he haue / al that he kan desire
 Though I him wrye a-nyght / *and* make hym warm
 And on hym leye my leg' outhur myn Arm 1828
 He groneth lyk oure boor / lith in oure sty
 Oother desport ryght noon of hym haue I
 I may nat plesse hym / in no maner cas
 ¶ O Thomas / Ie vous dy / Thomas / Thomas 1832
 This maketh the feend / this moste ben amended
 Ire is a thyng' that hye god defended
 And ther-of / wol I speke a word or two
 ¶ Now maister quod the wyf er þat I go 1836
 What wol ye dyne /? I wol go ther-about
 ¶ Now dame quod he / Ie vous dy sanz doute
 Haue I nat of a capon / but the lyuere
 And of youre softe breed / nat but a shyuere 1840
 And after that a rosted pigges heed
 But that I nolde / no beest for me were deul
 Thanne hadde I with yow hoonly suffisaunce
 I am a man / of litel sustenaunce 1844

My spirit hath his fostryng' in the Bible
 The body is ay / so redy and penyble
 To wake / that my stomak is destroyed
 I prey yow dame / ye be nat anoyed 1848
 Though I so freendly / yow my conseil shewe
 By god / I wolde nat telle it' but a fewe
 ¶ Now sire quod she / but o word er I go
 My child is deed / with-Inne thise wykes two 1852
 Soone after / þat ye wente out of this toun
 ¶ His deeth / saugh I by reuelacioun
 Seith this frere / at hoom in oure dortour
 I dar wel seyn / that er þat half an hour 1856
 After his deeth / I saugh hym born to blisse
 In myn Avision / so god me wisse
 So dide our Sexteyn / and oure ffermerer
 That han been trewe freres / fifty yeer 1860
 They may now / god be thanked of his loone
 Maken hir Iubilee / and walke allone
 And vp I roos / and al oure Couent eke
 With many a teare / triklyng' on my cheke 1864
 Withouten noyse / or claterynge of belles
 Te deum was oure song' and no thyng elles
 Saue / that to crist' I seyde an orison [leaf 87]
 Thankynge hym / of his reuelacion 1868
 ffor sire and dame / trusteth me right weel
 Oure orisons / been wel moore effectueel
 And moore we seen / of cristes secree thynges
 Than burel folk/ al though they weren kynges 1872
 We lyue in pouerte / and in abstinence
 And burell folk / in richesse and despence
 Of mete and drynke / and in hir foul delit'
 We han this worldes lust' al in despit/ 1876
 Lazar and diues / lyueden diuersly
 And diuerse gerdon / hadden they ther-by
 Who so wol preye / he moot faste and be clene
 And fatte his soule / and make his body lene

Melius est animam
 saginare quam
 corpus

We fare as seith thapostle / clooth and foode ¶ *Victus & vesti-*
 Suffisen vs / though they be nat ful goode *tus / hinc contenti*
 The clennesses and the fastynge of vs freres *sumus & cetera*
 Maketh / þat crist accepteth oure preyeres 1884
 ¶ Lo Moyse / fourty dayes / and fourty nyght ¶ *de orationibus*
 ffasted / er þat the heighe god of myght *& leumijis*
 Spak with hym / in the mount of Synay
 With empty wombe / fastynge many a day 1888
 Receyued he the lawe / that was writen
 With goddes fynger / and Elye wel ye witen
 In mount Oreb / er he hadde any speche
 With hye god / that is oure lyues leche 1892
 He fasted longe / and was in contemplaunce
 ¶ Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernaunce
 And eek / that othere preestes euerichon
 In-to the temple / whan they sholde gon 1896
 To preye for the peple / and do seruyse
 They nolden drynken / in no maner wyse
 No drynke / which þat myghte hem dronke make
 But there / in abstinence preye and wake 1900
 Lest that they deyden / taak heede what I seye
 But they be sobre / that for the peple preye
 War that / I seye namoore / for it suffiseth
 Oure lord Ihesu / as hooly writ deuyseth 1904
 Yaf vs ensample / of fastynge and preyeres
 Therfore / we mendynantz / we sely freres
 Been wedded / to pouerte and continence
 To charite / humblesse / and abstinence 1908
 To persecucion / for rightwisesse
 To wepynge / Misericorde and clennesses
 And therefore may ye se / þat oure preyeres
 I spoke of vs / we mendynantz we freres 1912
 Been to the hye god / moore acceptable
 Than youres / with youre fecstes at the table
 firo Paradys first if I shal nat lye [leaf 87, back]
 Was man out chaced / for his glotonye 1916

And chaast was man / in Paradys certeyn
 ¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn
 I ne haue no text of it/ as I suppose
 But I shal fynde it/ in a maner glose 1920
 That specially / oure sweete lord Ihesus
 Spak this by freres / whan he seyde thus
 ¶ Blessed be they / that pouere in spirit been
 And so forth / al the gospel / may ye seen 1924
 Wher it be likker / oure professioun
 Or hers / that swymmen in possessioun
 ffy on hire pompe / and hire glotonye
 And for hir lewednesse / I hem diffye 1928
 ¶ Me thynketh / they been lyk Iovinyan
 ffat as a whale / and walkynge as a swan
 Al vinolent as Botel in the spence
 Hir preyere / is of ful greet reuerence 1932
 Whan they for soules / seye the psalm of Dauit/
 Lo / but they seye / cor meum eructauit/
 Who folweth / cristes gospel / and his foore^e
 But we þat humble been / and chaast and poore 1936
 Werkeris of goddes word / not Auditours
 Therfore / right as an hawk vp at a sours
 Vp springeth in-to their / right so prayeres
 Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres 1940
 Maken hir sours / to goddes eres two
 Thomas Thomas / so moote I ryde or go
 And by that lord / þat clepid is seint Yue
 Nere thou oure brother / sholdestou nat thryue 1944
 In our Chapitre / praye we day and nyght
 To crist/ þat he thee sende / heele and myght
 Thy body / for to weelden hastily
 ¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I 1948
 As help me crist as in a fewe yeres
 I han spent / vp-on diuerse manere freres
 fful many a pound / yet fare I neuer the bet
 Certeyn my good / I haue almoost biset 1952

farwel my gold / for it is al ago
 ¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas dostow so?
 What nedeth yow / diuerse freres seche
 What nedeth hym / þat hath a parfit leche 1956
 To sechen / othere leches in the toun?
 Youre inconstance / is youre confusioun
 Holde ye thanne me / or elles oure Couent
 To praye for yow / been insufficient? 1960
 Thomas that Iape / nys nat worth a myte
 Youre maladye / is for we han to lyte
 A yif that Couent/ half a quarter otes [leaf 86]
 A yif that Couent/ .xxiiij. grotes 1964
 A yif that frere a peny / and lat hym go
 Nay nay Thomas / it may no thyng be so
 What is a ferthyng^t worth / parted in twelue
 Lo ech thyng^t that is oned / in it selue Omnis virtus vnita / forcelor
est seipen dispersa
 Is moore strong^t than when it is toscatered
 Thomas / of me / thou shalt nat been yflatered
 Thou woldest han oure labour al for noght^t
 The hye god / that al this world hath wroght^t 1972
 Seith that the werkman / worthy is his hyre ¶ Dignus est operarius.
mercede & cetera
 Thomas / noght^t of youre tresor I desire
 As for my self but that al oure Couent^t
 To preye for yow / is ay so diligent 1976
 And for to buylden / cristes owene chirche
 Thomas / if ye wol lerne for to wirche
 Of buyldynge vp of chirches / may ye fynde
 If it be good / in Thomas lyf of Inde 1980
 Ye lye heere / ful of Anger of Ire
 With which / the deuyl set youre herte afyre
 And chiden heere / the sely Innocent^t
 Youre wyf/ that is so meke and pacient 1984
 And therfore Thomas / trowe me if thee leste
 Ne stryue nat with thy wyf/ as for thy beste
 And ber this word away / now by thy feith
 Touchynge this thyng^t lo what the wise seith 1988

And for despit/ he drank' ful muchel moore
 An hondred part/ than he hadde bifoore
 And right anon / this Irous cursed wrecche
 Leet/ this knyghtes sone / bifoore hym fecche 2064
 Comandyng hym / he sholde bifoore hym stonde
 And sodeynly / he took his bowe in honde
 And vp the streng' he pulled to his ere
 And with an arwe / he slow the child right there 2068
 Now / wheither haue I / a siker hand or noon
 Quod he / is al my myght' and mynde agon
 Hath wyn bireft' me myne eyen sight'
 ¶ What sholde I telle / thanswere of the knyght' 2072
 His sone was slayn / ther is namoore to seye
 Beth war therfore / with lordes how ye pleye
 Syngeth Placebo / and I shal if I kan
 But if it be / vn-to a poure man 2076
 To a poure man / men sholde hise vices telle
 But nat to a lord / thogh he sholde go to helle
LO Irous Cirus / thilke Percien
 How he destroyed / the ryuer of Gysen 2080
 ffor that an hors of his was dreynt ther-Inne
 Whan pat he wente / Babiloigne to wynne
 He made / that the Ryuer / was so smal
 That wommen / myghte wade it ouer al 2084
 Lo what seyde he / that so wel teche kan
 Ne be no felawe to an Irous man
 Ne with no wood man / walke by the weye
 Lest thee repente / ther is namoore to seye 2088
NOw Thomas leeue brother / lef thyn Ire
 Thou shalt me fynde / as Iust/ as is a squyre
 Hoold nat the deueles knyf' ay at thyn herte
 Thyn angre dooth thee / al to soore smerte 2092
 But shewe to me / al thy confession
 ¶ Nay quod the sike man / by Seint Symon
 I haue be shryuen this day / at my curat'
 I haue hym toold hoolly al myn estat' 2096

Nedeth namoore / to speken of it seith he
 But if me list/ of myn humylitee
 ¶ Yif me thanne of thy gold / to make oure cloystre
 Quod he / for many a Muscle / and many an oystre 2100
 Whan othere men / han ben ful wel at eyse
 Hath been oure foode / our cloystre for to reyse
 And yet god woot vnnethe the fundement
 Parfourned is / ne of our panement 2104
 Nys nat a tyl yet/ with-Inne oure wones
 By god / we owen fourty pound for stones
 ¶ Now help Thomas / for hym that harwed helle [leaf 80, back]
 ffor elles / moste we oure bookes selle 2108
 And if ye lakke / oure predicacion
 Thanne goth the world / al to destruccion
 ffor who so wolde / vs fro this world bireue
 So god me saue / Thomas by youre leue 2112
 He wolde bireue / out of this world the sonne
 ffor who kan teche / and werchen as we konne
 And that is nat of litel tyme quod he
 But syn Ennok was / or Elise 2116
 Han freres been / that fynde I of record
 In charitee / ythanked be oure lord
 Now Thomas / helpe for seinte charitee
 And doun anon / he sette hym on his knee 2120
THis sike man / wax wel ny wood for Ire
 He wolde / þat the frere / had been on fire
 With his false dissymulacion
 Swich thyng^e as is in my possession 2124
 Quod he / that may I yeuen / and noon oother
 Ye sey me thus / that I am youre brother
 ¶ Ye certes quod the frere / trusteth weel
 I took oure dame / oure lettre and oure seel 2128
 ¶ Now wel quod he / and som what shal I yeue
 Vn-to youre hooly Couent whil I lyue
 And in thyn hand / thou shalt it haue anon
 On this condicion / and oother noon 2132



397 SIX-TEXT

230 GROUP D. § 6. SUMMONER'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

That thou departe it so / my leene brother
That every frere / haue also mucche as oother
This shaltou swere / on thy profession
With-outen fraude / or canillacion 2136
¶ I swere it quod this frere / by my feith
And ther-with-al / his hand in his he leith
Lo heer my feith / in me shal be no lak'
¶ Now thanne put In thyn hand down by my bak' 2140
Seyde this man / and grope wel bihynde
Bynethe my buttok' ther shaltow fynde
A thyng' that I haue hyd in pryuetee
¶ A thoghte this frere / this shal go with me 2144
And down his hand / he launcheth to the clifte
In hope / for to fynde there a yifte
And whan this sike man / felte this frere
Aboute his tuwel / grope there and heere 2148
Amydde his hand / he leet the frere a fart'
Ther nys no capul / drawynge in a Cart'
That myghte haue lete a fart' of swich a soun
¶ The frere vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun 2152
A fals cherl quod he / for goddes bones
This hastow for despit' doon for the nones
Thou shalt abyge this fart' if that I may [leaf 90]
¶ His meynee / whiche that herden this affray 2156
Cam lepyng In / and chaced out the frere
And forth he gooth / with a ful Angry cheere
And fette his felawe / ther as lay his stoor
He looked / as it were a wilde boor 2160
He grynte with his teeth / so was he wrooth
A sturdy paas / down to the lordes court he gooth
Wher as woned a man / of greet honour
To whom / that he was alwey confessour 2164
This worthy man / was lord of that village
This frere cam / as he were in a rage
Where as this lord / sat etyng' at his bord'
Vuncthes / myghte the frere / speke a word' 2168

Til atte laste / he seyde / god yow see
 ¶ This lord bigan to looke / and seide benedicitee
 What frere Iohn / what maner world is this?
 I trowe / som maner thyng^r ther is amys 2172
 Ye looken / as the wode / were ful of theuys
 Sit doun anon / and tel me what youre grief is
 And it shal been amended / if that I may
 ¶ I haue quod he / had a despit this Day 2176
 God yelde yow / adoun in youre village
 That in this world / is noon so poure a page
 That he nolde haue abhomynacioun
 Of that I haue receyued in youre toun 2180
 And yet greueth me / no thyng so soore
 As that this olde cherl / with lokkes hoore
 Blasphemed hath / oure hooly Couent eke
 ¶ Now maister quod this lord / I yow biseke 2184
 ¶ No maister quod he / but seruitour
 Thogh I haue had in scole swich honour
 God liketh nat^r that Raby men vs calle
 Neither in Market^r ne in youre large halle 2188
 ¶ No fors quod he / but tel me al youre grief^r
 ¶ Sire quod he / an odious meschief/
 This day bityd is / to myn ordre and me
 And so *per consequens* / in ech degree 2192
 Of hooly chirche / god amende it soone
 ¶ Sire quod the lord / ye woot what is to doone
 Distempre yow noght / ye be my Confessour
 Ye been the salt of the erthe / and the savour 2196
 ffor goddes loue / youre pacience ye holde
 Tel me youre grief/ and he anon hym tolde
 As ye han herd biforn / ye woot wel what^r
 ¶ The lady of the hous / al stille sat/ 2200
 Til she had herd / what the frere sayde
 Ey goddes mooder quod she / blisful mayde
 Is ther oght elles / telle me feithfully [leaf 00, back]
 ¶ Madame quod he / how thynke ye her-by^r 2204

¶ How that me thynketh quod she? so god me speede
 I seye / a cherle hath doon / a cherles dede
 What shold I seye / god lat hym neuere thee
 His sike heed / is ful of vanytee 2208
 I holde hym / in a manere frenesy
 ¶ Madame quod he / by god I shal nat lye
 But I on hym / oother weyes be wreke
 I shal disclaundre hym / ouer al ther I speke 2212
 This false blasphemour / that charged me
 To parte / that wol nat departed be
 To euery man yliche / with meschaunce
 ¶ The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce 2216
 And in his herte / he rolled vp and doun
 How hadde the cherl / this ymaginacioun
 To shewe swich a probleme / to the frere
 Neuere erst er now / herd I of swich mateere 2220
 I trowe / the deuel / putte it in his mynde
 In Ars Metrik¹ shal ther no man fynde
 Biforn this day / of swich a question
 Certes / it was a shrewed conclusion 2224
 That euery man / sholde haue yliche his part
 As of the soun / or savour / of a fart
 O vile proude cherl / I shrewe his face
 Lo sires quod the lord / with harde grace 2228
 Who herd euere of swich a thyng¹ er now
 To euery man ylike / tel me how?
 It is an impossible / it may nat be
 Ey nyce cherl / god lete thee neuere thee 2232
 The rumblynge of a fart / and euery soun
 Nis but of Eir reuerberacioun
 And euere it wasteth / litel and litel away
 Ther is no man / kan demen by my fey 2236
 If that it were departed equally
 What lo my cherl / lo yet how shrewedly
 Vn-to my confessour / to day he spak¹
 I holde hym certeyn / a demonyak¹ 2240

Now ete youre mete / and lat the cherl go pleye
 Lat hym go honge hymself a deuel weye

¶ The wordes of the lordes Squier and his keruere /
 for departynge of the fart on twelue ♫

NOW stood the lordes Squier at the bord
 That karf his mete / and herde word by word 2244
 Of alle thynges / whiche that I haue sayd
 My lord quod he / beth nat yuele apayd
 ¶ I koude telle for a gowne clooth [leaf 91]
 To yow sire frere / so ye be nat wrooth 2248
 How that this fart euene delt shal be
 Among youre Couent if it lyked me
 ¶ Tel quod the lord / and thou shalt haue anon
 A gowne clooth / by god / and by Seint Iohn 2252
 ¶ My lord quod he / whan þat the weder is fair
 With-uten wynd / or perturbynge of Air
 Lat brynge a Cartwheel in-to this halle
 But looke / that it haue his spokes alle 2256
 Twelue spokes / hath a Cartwheel comunly
 And bryng me thanne .xij. freres woot ye why?
 For twelue is a Couent / as I gesse
 The Confessour heere / for his worthynesse 2260
 Shal parfourne vp / the nombre of his Couent
 Thanne shal they knele down / by oon assent
 And to euery spokes ende / in this manere
 ful sadly / leye his nose shal a frere 2264
 Your noble Confessour / there god hym saue
 Shal holde his nose / vpright / vnder the Naue
 Thanne shal this cherl / with bely stif and toght
 As any Tabour / been hyder ybrought 2268
 And sette hym on the wheel / right of this Cart
 Vpon the Naue / and make hym lete a fart
 And ye shul seen / vp peril of my lyf/
 By preeue / which that is demonstratif 2272

That equally / the soun of it wol wende
 And eke the styng vn-to the spokes ende
 Saue þat this worthy man youre Confessour
 By cause / he is a man of greet honour 2276
 Shal haue the firste fruyt / as reson is
 As yet the noble vsage / of freres is
 The worthy men of hem / shul first be serued
 And certainly / he hath it weel disserued 2280
 He hath to day taught vs so muche good
 With prechyng in the pulpit ther he stood
 That I may vouche sauf / I sey for me
 He hadde the firste smel / of fartes three 2284
 And so wolde / al the Couent hardily
 He bereth hym / so faire and hoolily
 ¶ The lord / the lady / and alle men saue the frere
 Seyde / þat Iankyn spak / in this matere 2288
 As wel as Euclide / or Protholomee
 Touchyng this cherl / they seyde subtiltee
 And heigh wit made hym speke / as he spak /
 He nys no fool / ne no demonyak 2292
 And Iankyn / hath ywonne a newe gowne
 My tale is doon / we been almoost at towne

¶ Heere endeth the Somonours tale 𐀚

Woods Lib.



THE MERCHANT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 106, back.

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THE SQUIRE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 119, back.



THE FRANKLIN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 127, back.

WALTON

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THE DOCTOR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 137.

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THE PARDONER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 162.

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THE SECOND NUN.

Bluemere MS, leaf 191.

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THE CANON'S YEOMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 198.

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THE MANCIPLE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 207.

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THE PARSON.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, back.

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.]

His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. HOOPER.]

NOT COVERED

GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

§ 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe of the clerkes tale of
Oxenford  [leaf 91, back]

Sire clerk / of Oxenford / oure Hoost sayde
ye ryde as coy / and stille / as dooth a mayde
were newe spoused / sittynge at the bord
This day / ne herde I / of youre tonge a word 4
I trowe ye studie / aboute som Sophyme
But Salomon seith / euery thyng hath tyme ¶ pausacio

¶ ffor goddes sake / as beth of better cheere
It is no tyme / for to studien heere 8
Telle vs som myrie tale / by youre fey
ffor what man / that is entred in a pley
He nedes moot vnto the pley assente
But precheth nat as freres doon in lente 12
To make vs / for oure olde synnes wepe
Ne that thy tale / make vs nat to slepe ¶ pausacio

¶ Telle vs / som murie thyng / of auentures
Your termes / youre colours / and youre figures 16
Keepe hem in stoor / til so be that ye endite
Heigh style / as whan þat men to kynges write
Speketh so pleyn / at this tyme we yow preye 19
That we may vnderstonde what ye seye ¶ pausacio

¶ This worthy clerk benignely answerde
Hoost quod he / I am vnder youre yerde
Ye han of vs / as now the gouernance
And therefore / wol I do yow obeisance 24

As fer/ as resoñ axeth hardily
 I wol yow telle a tale / which that I^s
 LERNED at Padwe / of a worthy clerk^t
 As preued / by his wordes and his werk^t 28
 He is now deed / and nayled in his cheste
 I prey to god / so yeue his soule reste ¶ pausacio

¶ ffrauceys Pe[t]rak^t the lauriat poete
 Highte this clerk^t whos Rethorik^t sweete 32
 Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie
 As Lynyan dide / of Philosophie
 Or lawe / or oother Art particuler^t
 But deeth / þat wol nat dwellen heer 36
 But as it were / a twynklyng^t of an eye
 Hem bothe hath slayn / and alle shul we dye ¶ pausacio

¶ But forth to tellen / of this worthy man [leaf 92]
 That taughte me this tale / as I bigan [Latin note, p. 402] 40
 I seye / that first^t with heigh stile he enditeth
 Er he / the body of his tale writeth
 A prohemye / in the which discryueth he
 Pemonet^t / and of Saluces the contree 44
 And speketh of Apennyn / the hilles hye
 That been the boundes / of westlumbardye ¶ pausacio

¶ And of Mount Vesulus / in special
 Where as the poo / out of a welle smal 48
 Taketh his firste spryngyng^t and his sours
 That Estward / ay encresseth in his cours
 To Emeleward^t / to fierrare and Venyse
 The which a long^t thyng^t were to deuyse 52
 And trewely / as to my Iuggement^t
 Me thynketh it a thyng^t impertinent^t
 Sauē that he wole / conuoyen his mateere
 But this his tale / which that ye may heere ¶ pausacio

[For the Latin side-notes to the Clerk's Tale see pp. 274-5 at the end of the Tale.]

¶ Heere bigynneth the tale of the Clerk/ of
Oxenford

[on leaf 92]

THer is / at the West syde of Ytaille [*Latin note, p. 402*]
Doun at the roote / of Vesulus the colde
A lusty playne / habundant of vitaille ¶ *grata planicies*
Where many a tour and toun / thou mayst biholde

That founded were / in tyme / of fadres olde
And many another / delitable sighte
And Saluces this noble contree highte 63

A Markys / whilom lord was of that lond 64
As were / hise worthy eldres hym bfore
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle hise liges / bothe lasse and moore 67
Thus in delit he lyueth / and hath doon yooore
Biloued and drad / thurgh favour of ffortune
Bothe of hise lordes / and of his commune 70

[Painting of the Clerk on Foredeck]

Therwith he was / to speke as of lynage 71
The gentilleste yborn of lombardye
A fair persone and strong and yong of age
And ful [of] honour/ and of curteisye 74
Discreet ynogh / his contree for to gye
Saue that in somme thynges / þat he was to blame
And Walter/ was this yonge lordes name 77

I blame hym thus / that he considereth noght [*lf 92, bk*]
In tyme comynge / what hym myghte bityde
But in his lust present was al his thoght
As for to hauke and hunte / on euery syde 81
Wel ny / alle othere cures / leet he slyde
And eek he nolde / and that was worst of alle
Wedde no wyf / for noght þat may bifalle 84

Oonly that point his peple bar so soore 85
 That flokmeele on a day / they to hym wente ¶ Cateruatin
 And oon of hem / that wisest was of loore
 Or elles / that the lord / best wolde assente 88
 That he sholde telle hym / what his peple mente
 Or elles / koude he shewe wel swich mateere
 He to the Markys / seyde as ye shul heere 91

¶ O noble Markys / youre humanitee ¶ Tua inquit humanitas
 Asseureth vs / to yene vs hardinesse optime Marchio
 As ofte / as tyme is of necessitee
 That we to yow / mowe telle oure heuynesse 95
 Accepteth lord / now for youre gentillesse
 That we with pitous herte / vn-to yow pleyne
 And lat youre eres / nat my voys desdeyne 98

Al haue I noght to doone / in this mateere 99
 Moore than another man / hath in this place
 Yet for as muche / as ye my lord so deere
 Han alwey / shewed me / fauour and grace 102
 I dar the bettre / aske of yow a space
 Of Audience / to shewen oure requeste
 And ye my lord / to doon right as yow leste 105

ffor certes lord / so wel vs liketh yow 106
 And al youre werk / and euere han doon / þat we s
 Ne koude nat vs self deuysen how s
 We mygh̃te lyuen / in moore felicittee 109
 Saue o thyng lord / if youre wille be
 That for to been a wedded man yow leste
 Thanne were youre peple / in souereyn hertes reste 112

Boweth youre nekke / vnder that blisful yok / 113
 Of soueraynetee / noght of seruyse
 Which þat men clepeth / spousaille or wedlok
 And thenketh lord / among youre thoghtes wyse 116

How þat oure dayes passe / in sondry wyse
 ffor thogh we slepe / or wake / or rome / or ryde
 Ay fleeth the tyme / it nyl no man abyde 119

And thogh youre grene youthe / floure as yit' [leaf 98]
 In crepeth age alwey / as stille as stoon
 And deeth manaceth / euery age and smyt'
 In ech estaat' for ther escapeth noon 123
 And al so certein / as we knowe echoon
 That we shul deye / as vncerteyn / we alle s
 Been of that day / whan deeth shal on vs falle 126

Accepteth thanne of vs / the trewe entente 127
 That neuere yet' refuseden thyn heeste
 And we wol lord / if that ye wole assente
 Chese yow a wyf / in short tyme atte leeste 130
 Born of the gentilleste / and of the meeste
 Of al this land / so that it oghte seme
 Honour to god and yow / as we kan deeme 133

Deliuere vs / out of al this bisy drede 134
 And taak a wyf for hye goddes sake
 ffor if it so bifelle / as god forbede
 That thurgh youre deeth / youre lyne sholde slake 137
 And that a straunge Successour sholde take
 Your heritage / o wo were vs alyue
 Wherfore / we pray you hastily to wyue 140

¶ Hir meeke preyere / and hir pitous cheere 141
 Made the Markys herte / han pitee
 Ye wol quod he / myn owene peple deere
 To that I neuere erst thoughte / streyne me 144
 I me reioyssed / of my liberte
 That seelde tyme / is founde in mariage
 Ther I was free / I moot been in seruage 147

But natheles / I se youre trewe entente	148
And truste vpon youre wit / and haue doon ay	
Wherfore / of my free wyl / I wole assente	
To wedde me / as soone as euere I may	151
But ther as ye / han profred me this day	
To chese me a wyf / I yow relese	
That choys / and prey of that profre cesse	154
ffor god it woot that children ofte been	155
Vnlyk hir worthy eldres hem bifore	
Bountee comth al of god / nat of the streen	
Of which / they been engendred and ybore	158
I truste in goddes bontee / and therfore °	
My mariage / and myn estaat and reste	
I hym bitake / he may doon as hym leste	161
Lat me allone / in chesyng of my wyf	[leaf 63, back]
That charge / vp on my bak / I wole endure	
But I yow preye / and charge vp on youre lyf	
What wyf that I take / ye me assure	165
To worshiþe hire / whil that hir lyf may dure	
In word and werk / bothe heere and euerywhere	
As she / an Emperoures doghter weere	168
And forthermooore / this shal ye swere / that ye °	169
Agayn my choys / shul neither grucche ne stryue	
ffor sith / I shal / forgoon my libertee	
At youre requeste / as euere moot I thryue	172
Ther as myn herte is set ther wol I wyue	
And but ye wole assente in this manere	
I prey yow / speketh namooore of this matere	175
¶ With hertely wyl / they sworn and assenten	176
To al this thyng ther seyde no wight nay	
Bisekyng hym of grace / er that they wenten	
That he / wolde graunten hem a certein day	179

Of his spousaille / as soone / as euere he may
 for yet alwey / the peple som what dredde
 Lest þat this Markys / no wyf wolde wedde 182

¶ He graunted hem a day / swich as hym leste 183
 On which / he wolde be wedded sikerly
 And seyde / he dide al this at hir requeste
 And they / with humble entente / buxomly 186
 Knelynge vp on hir knees ful reuerently
 Hym thonken alle / and thus they han an ende
 Of hire entente / and hoom agayn they wende 189

¶ And heer vp on / he to hise officeres 190
 Comaundeth / for the feste to purveye
 And to hise priuce knyghtes and squieres
 Swich charge yaf / as hym liste on hem leye , 193
 And they / to his comandement obeye
 And ech of hem / dooth al his diligence
 To doon / vn-to the feeste reuerence 196

¶ Explicit/ prima pars 卐

¶ Incipit/ secunda pars 卐

[leaf 96]

NOght fer / fro thilke paleys honourable *[Latin mss., p. 402]*
 Ther as this Markys / shoope his mariage
 There stood a throope / of site delitable
 In which / that poure folk / of that village 200
 Hadden hir beestes / and hir herbergage
 And of hire labour / tooke hir sustenance
 After that the erthe / yaf hem habundance 203
 Amonges thise poure folk / ther dwelte a man 204
 Which þat was holden / pourest of hem alle
 But hye god / som tyme senden kan
 His grace / in to a litel oxes stalle 207
 Ianicula / men of that throope hym calle
 A doghter hadde he / fair ynogh to sighte
 And Grisildis / this yonge mayden highte 210

But for to speke / of vertuous bountee	211
Thanne was she / oon the faireste vnder sonne	
ffor pourelliche / yfostred vp was she	
No likerous lust / was thurgh hire herte yronne	214
Wel offer / of the welle / than of the tonne	
She drank / and for she wolde vertu plesse	
She knew wel labour / but noon ydel ese	217
But thogh this mayde / tendre were of ago	218
Yet in the brest / of hire virginitee	
Ther was enclosed / rype and sad corage	
And in greet reuerence / and charitee	221
Hir olde poure fader / fostred shee	
A fewe sheepe / spyngynge on feeld she kepte	
She wolde noght / been ydel til she slepte	224
And whan she homward cam / she wolde brynge	225
Wortes / or othere herbes / tymes ofte	
The whiche she shredde / and seeth for hir lyuyng	
And made hir bed / ful harde and no thyng softe	228
And ay she kepte / hir fadres lyf on lofte	
With euerich obeisaunce and diligence	
That child may doon / to fadres reuerence	231
¶ Vp on Grisilde / this poure creature	232
fful ofte sithe / this Markys caste his eye	
As he / on huntyng rood paraenture	
And whan þat it fil / þat he myghite hire espye	235
He noght / with wantowne lookyng of folye	
Hise eyen caste on hire / but in sad wyse	
Vp on hir chiere / he gan hym ofte auyse	238
Commendynge in his herte / hir wommanhede	[leaf 94, back]
And eek hir vertu / passynge any wight	
Of so yong age / as wel in chiere as dede	
ffor thogh the peple / hadde no greet insight	242

In vertu / he considered ful right/
 Hir bountee / and disposed that he wolde
 Wedde hire onoly / if euere he wedde sholde 245

¶ The day of weddyng cam / but no wight kan 246
 Telle / what womman / that it sholde be
 ffor which merueille / wondred many a man
 And seyden / whan that they were in priuete 249
 Wol nat oure lord / yet leue his vanytee ?
 Wol he nat wedde / allas allas the while ?
 Why wole he thus / hym self and vs bigile ? 252

¶ But natheles / this Markys hath doon make 253
 Of gemmes / set in gold and in Asure
 Brooches and rynges / for Grisildis sake
 And of hir clothyng took he the mesure 256
 By a mayde / lyk to hire stature
 And eek of othere aornementes alle
 That vn-to swich a weddyng sholde falle 259

The time of vndren / of the same day 260
 Approcheth / that this weddyng sholde be
 And al the paleys / put was in array
 Bothe halle and chambres / ech in his degree 263
 Houses of office / stuffed with plentee
 Ther maystow seen / of deynteuous vitaille
 That may be founde / as fer as last ytaille 266

This roial Markys / richely arrayed 267
 Lordes and ladyes / in his compaignye
 The whiche / that to the feeste weren yprayed
 And of his retenue / the bachelrye 270
 With many a soun / of sondry melodye
 Vn-to the village / of the which I tolde
 In this array / the righte wey han holde 273

¶ Grisilde of this / god woot ful Innocentⁱ 274
 That for hire / shapen was al this array
 To fecchen water at a welle is wentⁱ
 And comth hoom / as soone as euer she may 277
 ffor wel she hadde herd seyde / that thilke day
 The Markys sholde wedde / and if she myghte
 She wolde fayn / han seyn / som of that sighte 280

She thoghte / I wole / with othere maydens stonde [leaf 95]
 That been my felawes / in oure dore and se [Latin note, p. 402]
 The Markysesse / and therefore wol I fonde
 To doon at hoom / as soone as it may be 284
 The labour / which that longeth vn-to me
 And thanne I may / at leyser hire biholde
 If she this wey / vn-to the Castel holde 287

And as she wolde / ouer hir thresshold gon 288
 The Markys cam / and gan hire for to calle
 And she set down / hir water pot anon
 Biside the thresshold / in an Oxes stalle 291
 And down vp-on hir kneis she gan to falle
 And with sad contenance / kneleth stille
 Til she had herd / what was the lordes will 294

¶ This thoughtful Markys / spak vn-to this mayde 295
 fful sobrelly / and seyde in this manere [Latin note, p. 402]
 Where is youre fader / o Grisildis he sayde
 And she with reuerence / in humble cheere 298
 Answerde. lord / he is al redy heere
 And In she gooth / with outen lenger lette
 And to the Markys / she hir fader fette 301

He by the hand / thanne took this olde man 302
 And seyde thus / whan he hym hadde asyde
 Ianicula / I neither may ne kan
 Lenger / the plesance of myn herte hyde 305

If that thou vouche sauf what so bityde
 Thy doghter wol I take / er þat I wende
 As for my wyf vn-to hir lyues ende 308

Thou louest me / I woot it wel certeyn 309
 And art my feithful / lige man ybore
 And all that/ liketh me / I dar wel seyn
 It liketh thee / and specially therfore 312
 Tel me that poynt / that I haue seyð bfore
 If that thou wolt vn-to that purpos drawe
 To take me / as for thy sone in lawe 315

¶ This sodeyn cas / this man astonyed so 316
 That reed he wax abayst and al quakyng
 He stood / vnnethes seyde he wordes mo
 But oonly thus / lord quod he / my willynge 319
 Is as ye wole / ne ayeys / youre likyng 8
 I wol no thyng ye be my lord so deere
 Right as yow lust gouerneth this mateere 322

¶ Yet wol I / quod this Markys softly (leaf 95, back)
 That in thy chambre / I. and thou / and she
 Haue a collacioñ / and wostow why ?
 ffor I wol axe / if it hire wille be 326
 To be my wyf / and reule hire after me
 And al this shal be doon / in thy presence
 I wol noght speke / out of thyn Audience 329

¶ And in the chambre / whil they were aboute 330
 Hir tretys / which as ye shal after heere
 The peple cam / vn-to the hous with oute
 And wondred hem / in how honeste manere 333
 And tentify / she kepte hir fader deere
 But outrely / Grisildis wondre myghte
 ffor neuere erst ne saugh she swich a sighte 336

No wonder is / thogh she were astoned [*Latin note*, p. 402] 337

To seen so greet a gest' come in that place

She neuere was / to swiche gestes woned

ffor which / she looked / with ful pale face 340

But shortly / forth this tale for to chace

Thise arn the wordes / þat the Markys sayde

To this benigne / verray feithful mayde 343

¶ Grisilde he seyde / ye shal wel vnderstonde 344

It liketh to youre fader and to me [*Latin note*, p. 402]

That I yow / wedde / and eek it may so stonde

As I suppose / ye wol that it so be 347

But thise demandes / axe I first quod he

That sith it shal be doon / in hastif wyse

Wol ye assente / or elles yow auyse 350

I seye this / be ye redy with good herte 351

To al my lust' and that I frely may

As me best thynketh / do yow laughe or smerte

And neuere ye to grucche it' nyght ne day 354

And eek' whan I sey ye / ne sey nat nay

Neither by word / ne frownyng' contenance

Swere this / and heere I swere yow alliance 357

¶ Wondrynge vp on this word / quakyng for drede 358

She seyde lord / vndigne and vnworthy^s [*Latin note*, p. 402]

Am I / to thilke honour / þat ye me beede

But as ye wole youre self' right so wol .I. 361

And heere I swere / that neuere willyngly

In werk ne thought I nyl yow disobeye

ffor to be deed / though me were looth to deye 364

¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he [leaf 96] 365

And forth he gooth / with a ful sobre cheere

Out at the dore / and after that cam she

And to the peple / he seyde in this manere 368

This is my wyf quod he / þat standeth heere
 Honoureth hire / and loueth hire I preye
 Who so me loueth / ther is namore to seye 371

And for that no thyng^t of hir olde geere [*Latin note*, p. 402] 372
 She sholde brynge in to his hous / he bad ^s
 That wommen / sholde dispoillen hire right there
 Of which thise ladyes / were nat right glad 375
 To handle hir clothes / wher Inne she was clad
 But nathelees / this mayde bright of hewe
 ffro foot to heed / they clothed han al newe 378

Hir heris han they kembd / that lay vntressed 379
 fful rudely / and with hir fyngres smale
 A corone on hire heed / they han ydressed
 And sette hire / ful of Nowches grete and smale 382
 Of hire array / what sholde I make a tale
 Vnnethe the peple hire knew / for hire fairnesse
 Whan she translated was in swich richesse 385

¶ This Markys / hath hire spoused with a ryng^t 386
 Broght for the same cause / and thanne hire sette
 Vp on an hors snow whit and wel amblyng^t
 And to his paleys / er he lenger lette 389
 With ioyful peple þat hire ladde and mette
 Conuoyed hire / and thus the day they spende
 In reuel / til the sonne gan descende 392

And shortly / forth this tale for to chace 393
 I seye / that to this newe Markysesse
 God hath swich fauour / sent hire of his grace
 That it ne semed nat^t by liklynesse 396
 That she was / born and fed in rudenesse
 As in a cote / or in an Oxe Stalle
 But norissed / in an Emperoures halle 399

¶ To euery wight/ she woxen is so deere [*Latin note, p. 402*] 400
 And worshipful / þat folk ther she was bore
 And from hire birthe / knewe hire yeer by yeere
 Vnnethe trowed they / but dorste han swore 403
 That she to Ianicle / of which I spak bfore
 She doghter were / for as by coniecture
 Hem thoughte / she was another creature 406

ffor though that euere vertuous was she [*leaf 96, back*] 407
 She was encressed / in swich excellence
 Of thewes goode / yset in heigh bountee
 And so discreet and fair of eloquence 410
 So benigne / and so digne of reuerence
 And koude so / the peples herte embrace
 That ech hire louede / that looked on hir face 413

¶ Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun 414
 Publiced was / the beautee of hir name
 But eek biside / in many a regioun
 If oon seide wel / another seyde the same 417
 So spradde / of hire heighe bountee the name
 That men and wommen / as wel yonge as olde
 Goon to Saluce / vpon hire to bihold 420

Thus Walter lowely ^s nay / but roially [*Latin note, p. 402*] 421
 Wedded / with fortunat honestete
 In goddes pees / lyueth ful esily
 At hoom / and outward / grace ynogh had he 424
 And for he saugh / that vnder heigh degree [*Latin note, p. 402*]
 Was vertu hid / the peple hym heelde
 A prudent man / and that is seyn ful seelde 427

¶ Nat oonly this Grisildis / thurgh hir wit [*Latin note, p. 402*]
 Koude al the feet of wyfly humblenesse
 But eek whan that the cas required it
 The commune profit koude she redresse 431

Ther nas discord / rancour / ne heuynesse
 In al that land / that she ne koude apese
 And wisely / brynge hem alle in reste *and* ese 434

Though that hire housbonde absent were/ anon ^s 435
 If gentil men / or othere of hire contree [Latin note, p. 402]

Were wrothe / she wolde bryngen hem aton
 So wise / and rype wordes hadde she 438

And Iuggementz of so greet equitee
 That she from heuene / sent was as men wende
 Peple to saue / and euery wrong tamende 441

¶ Nat longe tyme / after/ that this Grisild
 Was wedded / she a doghter hath ybore 442

Al had hire leuere / haue born a man child
 Glad was this Markys / and the folk therfore 445

ffor though a mayde child / coome al bifore
 She may / vn-to a man child atteyne
 By liklihed / syn she nys nat bareyne 448

¶ Explicit secunda pars ॐ

¶ Incipit tercia pars ॐ [leaf 97]

THer fil / as it bifalleth tymes mo ^s [Latin note, p. 402] 449
 Whan þat this child / had souked but a throwe

This Markys / in his herte longeth so
 To tempte his wyf hir sadnesse for to knowe 452

That he ne myghte / out of his herte throwe
 This merueillous desir/ his wyf tassaye

Nedeles god woot/ he thoghte / hire for taffraye 455

He hadde assayed hire / ynogh bifore 456

And foond hire euere good / what neded it

Hire for to tempte / and alwey / moore and moore
 Though som men preise it for a subtil wit/ 459

But as for me / I seye that yuele it sit

To assaye a wyf whan þat it is no nede
 And putten hire / in angwyssh and in drede 462

ffor which / this Markys / wroghte in this manere 463
 He cam allone / a nyght / ther as she lay
 With stierne face / and with ful trouble cheere
 And seyde thus / Grisilde quod he that day 466
 That I yow took/ out of youre pouere array
 And putte yow / in estaat of heigh noblesse
 Ye haue / nat that foryeten as I gesse 469

I seye Grisilde / this present dignitee 470
 In which that I haue put yow /. as I trowe s
 Maketh yow nat foryetful for to be
 That I yow took/ in poure estaat ful lowe 473
 ffor any wele / ye moot youre seluen knowe
 Taak heede / of euery word / that y yow seye
 Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tweye 476

Ye woot youre self wel / how þat ye cam heere 477
 In to this hous / it is nat longe ago
 And though to me / þat ye be lief and deere
 Vn-to my gentils / ye be no thyng so 480
 They seyn / to hem / it is greet shame and wo
 ffor to be subgetz / and to been in seruage
 To thee / that born art/ of a smal village 483

And namely / sith thy doghter was ybore 484
 Thise wordes / han they spoken doutelees
 But I desire / as I haue doon bifore
 To lyue my lyf with hem / in reste and pees 487
 I may nat in this caas / be recchelees
 I moot doon with thy doghter/ for the beste
 Nat as I wolde / but as my peple leste 490

And yet god woot this is ful looth to me [leaf 97, back]
 But nathelees / with oute youre wityng
 I wol nat doon / but this wol I quod he
 That ye to me assente / as in this thyng 494

Shewe now youre pacience / in youre werkyng'
 That ye me highite / and swore in youre village
 That day / that maked was oure mariage 497

¶ Whan she had herd al this / she noght ameued 498
 Neither in word / or chiere or countenance ¶ *Nec verbo / nec*
vultu &cetera
 ffor as it semed / she was nat agreued
 She seyde lord / al lyth in youre plesaunce 501
 My child and I / with hertely obeisaunce
 Been youre al / and ye mowe saue *and* spille
 Your owene thyng' werketh after youre wille 504

Ther may no thyng / god so my soule saue 505
 Liken to yow / that may displese me
 Ne I ne desire / no thyng' for to haue
 Ne drede for to leese / saue oonly thee /. *vel yee* 508
 This wyl is in myn herte / and ay shal be
 No lengthe of tyme / or deeth may this deface
 Ne chaunge my corage / to another place 511

¶ Glad was this Markys / of hire answeyng' 512
 But yet he feyned / as he were nat so
 Al drery was his cheere / and his lookyng'
 Whan þat he sholde / out/ of the chambre go 515
 Soone after this / a furlong wey or two
 He priuely / hath toold al his entente
 Vn-to a man / and to his wyf hym sente 518

A maner sergeant' was this priuee man 519
 The which þat feithful ofte / he founden hadde
 In thynges grete / and eek swich folk wel kan
 Doon execucioñ on thynges badde 522
 The lord knew wel / that he hym loued *and* dradde
 And whan this sergeant' wiste the lordes wille
 In to the chambre / he stalked hym ful stille 525

- ¶ Madame he seyde / ye moote foryeue it me 526
 Though I do thyng to which I am constreyned
 Ye been so wys / that ful wel knowe ye
 That lordes heestes / mowe nat been yfeyned 529
 They mowe wel been / biwailed and compleyned
 But men moote nede / vn-to hire lust obeye
 And so wol I / ther is namoore to seye 532
- This child / I am comanded for to take [leaf 96] 533
 And spak namoore / but out the child he hente
 Despitously / and gan a cheere make
 As though he wolde / han slayn it er he wente 536
 Grisildis / moot al suffren and consente
 And as a lamb / she sitteth meke and stille
 And leet this cruel sergeant doon his wille 539
- ¶ Suspicious / was the diffame of this man ¶ *suspecta viri fama*
 Suspect his face / suspect his word also ¶ *suspecta facie*
 Suspect the tyme / in which he this bigan ¶ *suspecta hora*
 ¶ *suspecta erat oratio*
 Allas hir doghter / that she loued so 543
 She wende / he wolde han slawen it right tho
 But nathelees / she neither weepe ne syked
 Consentynge hire / to that the Markys lyked 546
- But atte laste / to speken she bigan 547
 And mekely / she to the sergeant preyde
 So as he was / a worthy gentil man
 That she moste kisse hire child / er þat it deyde 550
 And in hir barm / this litel child she leyde
 With ful sad face / and gan the child to kisse
 And lulled it and after gan it blisse 553
- And thus she seyde / in hire benigne voys 554
 ffare weel my child / I shal thee neuere see
 But sith / I thee / haue marked with the croys
 Of thilke fader / blessed moote he be 557

That for vs deyde / vp on a croys of tree
 Thy soule litel child / I hym bitake
 ffor this nyght' shaltow dyen for my sake 560

¶ I trowe / that to a norice in this cas 561
 It had been hard / this reuthe for to se
 Wel myghte a mooder / thanne han cryd allas
 But nathelees / so sad and stidefast was she 564
 That she endured / al aduersitee
 And to the *sergeant* mekely she sayde
 Haue heer agayn / youre litel yonge mayde 567

Gooth now quod she / and dooth my lordes heeste 568
 And o thyng/ wol I prey yow of youre grace
 That but my lord / forbad yow atte leeste
 Burieth this litel body / in som place 571
 That beestes ne no briddes / it to-race
 But he no word / wol to that *purpos* seye
 But took the child / and wente vpon his weye 574

¶ This *sergeant* cam vn-to his lord ageyn [leaf 96, back]
 And of Grisildis wordes / and hire cheere
 He tolde hym point' for point' in short and pleyn
 And hym presenteth / with his doghter deere 578
 Somwhat this lord / hath routhie in his manere
 But nathelees / his *purpos* heeld he stille
 As lordes doon / whan they wol han hir wille 581

And bad his *sergeant* that he pryuely 582
 Sholde this child / softe wynde and wrappe
 With alle circumstances / tendrely
 And carie it in a cofre / or in a lappe 585
 But vp-on payne / his heed of for to swappe
 That no man sholde knowe / of his entente
 Ne whenne / ne whider that he wente 588

But at Boloigne / to his suster deere 589
 That thilke tyme / of Pavik was Countesse
 He sholde it take / and shewe hire this mateere
 Bisekyng hire / to doon hire bisynesse 592
 This child to fostre / in alle gentillesse
 And whos child that it was / he bad hym hyde
 ffrom euery wight/ for oght þat may bityde 595

 ¶ The sergeant gooth / and hath fulfild this thyng^r 596
 But to this Markys / now retourne we
 ffor now gooth he / ful faste ymaginyng^r
 If by his wyues cheere / he myghte se 599
 Or by hire word aperceyue / that she^s
 Were chaunged / but he neuere hire koude fynde
 But euere in oon / ylike sad and kynde 602

 As glad / as humble / as bisy in seruyse [*Latin note, p. 402*] 603
 And eek^r in loue / as she was wont to be
 Was she to hym / in euery maner wyse
 Ne of hir doghter/ noght a word spak she 606
 Noon accident for noon aduersitee
 Was seyn in hire / ne neuere hir doghter name
 Ne nempned she / in ernest / nor in game 609

¶ Explicit tercia pars 𐀓

Sequitur pars quarta 𐀓

[leaf 99]

IN this estaat/ ther passed been foure yeer [*Latin note, p. 402*]
 Er she with childe was / but as god wolde
 A man child she bar / by this Walter
 fful gracious / and fair for to biholde 613
 And whan that folk^r it to his fader tolde
 Nat oonly he / but al his contree merye
 Was for this child / and god they thanke and herye 616

 Whan it was two yeer old^r / and fro the brest^r 617
 Departed of his norice / on a day
 This Markys / caughte yet another lest^r

To tempte his wyf / yet ofter if he may 620
 O nedeles / was she tempted in assay
 But wedded men / ne knowe no mesure
 Whan þat they fynde / a pacient creature 623

¶ Wyf quod this Markys / ye han herd er this [*Latin note,*
p. 402]
 My peple / sikly berth oure mariage
 And namely / sith my sone yborn is
 Now is it worse / than euere in al oure age 627
 The murmure sleeth myn herte and my corage
 ffor to myne eres / comth the voys so smerte
 That it wel ny / destroyed hath myn herte 630

¶ Now sey they thus / whan Walter is agon 631
 Thanne shal / the blood of Ianicle succede
 And been oure lord / for oother haue we noon
 Swiche wordes / seith my peple out of drede 634
 Wel oughte I / of swich murmur taken heede
 ffor certainly / I drede swich sentence
 Though they nat pleyn / speke in myn Audience 637

I wolde lyue in pees / if that I myghȝte 638
 Wherefore / I am disposed outrelȝ
 As I his suster / serued by nyghȝte
 Right so thenke I / to serue hym pryuelȝ 641
 This warne I yow / þat ye nat sodeynly
 Out of youre self for no wo sholde outreye
 Beth pacient and ther of I yow preye 644

¶ I haue quod she seyde thus / and euere shal 645
 I wol no thyng ne nyl no thyng certayn
 But as yow list naught greueth me at al
 Though þat my doughter / and my sone be slayn 648
 At youre comandement this is to sayn
 I haue noght had no part of children tweyne
 But first siknesse / and after wo and payne 651

- Ye been oure lord / dooth with youre owene thyng' [1700, bk]
 Right as yow list axeth no reed at me
 ffor as I lefte at hoom / al my clothyng'
 Whan I first cam to yow/^s right so quod she 655
 Lefte I my wyl / and al my libertee
 And took youre clothyng' wherfore I yow preye
 Dooth youre plesance / I wol youre lust obeye 658

 And certes / if I hadde prescience 659
 Your wyl to knowe / er ye youre lust me tolde
 I wolde it doon / with outen necligence
 But now I woot youre lust and what ye wolde 662
 Al youre plesance / ferme and stable I holde
 ffor wiste I / that my deeth / wolde do yow ese [Latin note,
 p. 102]
 Right gladly / wolde I dyen yow to ples 665

 Deth may noght make no comparisoun 666
 Vn-to youre loue / and whan this Markys say
 The constance of his wyf / he caste adoun
 Hise eyen two / and wondreth þat she may 669
 In pacience / suffre al this array
 And forth he goth / with drery contenance
 But to his herte / it was ful greet plesance 672

 ¶ This vgly sergeant/ in the same wyse 673
 That he hire doghter caughte / right so he
 Or worse / if men worse kan deuyse
 Hath hent hire sone / þat ful was of beautee 676
 And euere in oon / so pacient was she
 That she no chiere maade / of heuynesse
 But kiste hir sone / and after gan it blesse 679

 Saue this / she preyde hym / that if he myghite 680
 Hir litel sone / he wolde in erthe graue
 His tendre lymes / delicaat to sighte
 ffro foweles and fro beestes for to saue 683

But she noon answer / of hym myghte haue
 He wente his wey / as hym no thyng ne roghte
 But to Boloigne / he tendrely it broghte 686

This Markys / wondred euere lenger the moore 687
 Vp on hir pacience / and if that he
 Ne hadde soothly / knowen ther bifoore
 That parfitly / hir children loued she 690
 He wolde haue wend / þat of som subtiltee
 And of malice / or for crueel corage
 That she hadde suffred this with sad visage 693

But wel he knew / that next hym self certayn [leaf 100]
 She loued hir children best in euery wyse
 But now of wommen / wolde I axen fayn
 If thise assayes / myghte nat suffise 697
 What koude a sturdy housbonde moore deuyse
 To preeue hire wyfhod / or hir stedefastnesse
 And he continuyge euere in sturdinesse 700

But ther been folk / of swich condicion 701
 That whan they haue / a certein purpos take
 They kan nat stynte of hire entencion
 But right as they were bounden to that stake 704
 They wol nat of that firste purpos slake
 Right so this Markys / fulliche hath purposed
 To tempte his wyf / as he was first disposed 707

He waiteth / if by word / or contenance 708
 That she to hym / was changed of corage
 But neuere / koude he fynde variance
 She was ay oon / in herte and in visage 711
 And ay the forther / þat she was in age
 The moore trewe / if þat it were possible
 She was to hym in loue / and moore penyble 714

ffor which it semed thus / þat of hem two 715
 Ther nas but o wyl / for as walter leste
 The same lust' was hire plesance also
 And god be thanked / al fil for the beste 718
 She shewed wel / for no worldly vnreste
 A wyf' as of hir self' no thing' ne sholde
 Wille in effect' but as hir housbonde wolde 721

¶ The slaundre of Walter / ofte and wyde spradde 722
 That of a crueel herte / he wikkedly [Latin note, p. 402]
 ffor he a poure womman wedded hadde
 Hath mordred / bothe his children priuely 725
 Swich murmure / was among hem comunly
 No wonder is / for to the peples ere
 Ther cam no word / but þat they mordred were 728

ffor which / where as his peple ther bifore 729
 Hadde loued hym wel / the slaundre of his diffame
 Made hem / that they hym hated therfore
 To been a mordre is an hateful name 732
 But natheles / for earnest' ne for game
 He of his crueel purpos nolde stente
 To tempte his wyf / was set al his entente 735

¶ Whan that his doghter .xij. yeer was of age [leaf 100, back]
 He to the court of Rome in subtil wyse
 Enformed of his wyl / sente his message
 Comaundyng hem / swiche bulles to deuyse 739
 As to his crueel purpos may suffyse
 How þat the pope / as for his peples reste
 Bad hym to wedde / another if hym leste 742

I seye / he bad they sholde countrefete 743
 The popes bulles / makynge mencion
 That he hath leue / his firste wyf to lete
 As by the popes dispensacion 746

To stynte rancour and dissencion
 Bitwixe his peple and hym / thus seyde the bulle
 The which / they han publiced atte fulle 749

¶ The rude peple / as it no wonder is 750
 Wenden ful wel / that it hadde be right so
 But whan thise tidynges cam to Grisildis
 I deeme / that hire herte was ful wo 753
 But she / ylike sad for eueremo
 Disposed was / this humble creature
 The aduersitee of ffortune al tendure 756

Abidyng eue / his lust and his plesance 757
 To whom þat she was yeuen / herte and al
 As to hire verray worldly suffisance
 But shortly / if this storie I tellen shal 760
 This Markys / writen hath in special
 A lettre / in which he sheweth his entente
 And secreely he to Boloigne it sente 763

To the Erl of Pavyk / which þat hadde tho 764
 Wedded his suster / preyde he specially
 To bryngen hoom agayn hise children two
 In honorable estaat / al openly 767
 But o thyng / he hym preyde outrely
 That he to no wight though men wolde enquire
 Sholde nat telle / whos children þat they were 770

But seye / the mayden / sholde ywedded be 771
 Vn-to the Markys / of Saluce anon
 And as this Erl was preyd / so dide he
 ffor at day set he on his wey is goon 774
 Toward Saluce / and lordes many oon
 In riche array this mayden for to gyde
 Hir yonge brother / ridyng hire bisydo 777

¶ Arrayed was toward hir mariage [leaf 101]

This fresshe mayde / ful of gemmes cleere

Hir brother / which þat .vij. yeer was of age

Arrayed eek / ful fressh in his manere 781

And thus in greet noblesse / and with glad cheere

Toward Saluces / shapyng hir iourney

fro day to day / they ryden in hir wey 784

¶ Explicit quarta pars 𐝱

¶ Sequitur pars quinta 𐝱

Among al this / after his wikke vsage 785

This Markys yet his wyf to tempte moore

To the outtreste preeue / of hir corage

fully / to han experience and loore 788

If that she were / as stidefast as bifoore

He on a day / in open audience

ful boistously hap seyde hire this sentence 791

¶ Certes Grisilde / I hadde ynogh plesance 792

To han yow to my wyf / for youre goodnesse

As for youre trouthe / and for youre obeisance

Noght for youre lynage / ne for youre richesse 795

But now knowe I / in verray soothfastnesse

That in greet lordshipe / if I wel auyse

Ther is greet seruitute / in sondry wyse 798

I may nat doon / as euery Plowman may 799

My peple / me constreyneth for to take

Another wyf / and crien day by day

And eek the pope / rancour for to slake 802

Consenteth it that dar I vndertake

And treweliche / thus muche I wol yow seye

My newe wyf is comynge by the weye 805

Be strong of herte / and voyde anon hir place 806

And thilke dower / that ye broghten me

Taak it agayn / I graunte it of my grace

Retourneth / to youre fadres hous quod he 809
 No man / may alwey han prosperitee
 With euene herte / I rede yow tendure
 This strook' of ffortune / or of auenture 812

¶ And she answerde agayn in pacience [leaf 161, back] 813
 My lord quod she / I woot and wiste alway
 How þat / bitwixen youre magnificence
 And my pouerte / no wight kan ne may 816
 Maken comparison / it is no nay
 I ne heeld me neuere digne in no manere
 To be youre wyf / no ȝ ne youre Chambrere 819

And in this hous / ther ye me lady maake 820
 The heighe god / take I for my witnesse
 And also wysly / he my soule glaade
 I neuere / heeld me lady / ne maistresse 823
 But humble seruant to youre worthynesse
 And euere shal / whil þat my lyf may dure
 Abouen / euery worldly creature 826

That ye so longe / of youre benignitee 827
 Han holden me / in honour and nobleye
 Where as I was / noght worthy bee
 That thonke I god / and yow /. to whom I preye 830
 fforyelde it yow / ther is namoore to seye
 Vn-to my fader/ gladly wol I wende
 And with hym dwelle / vn-to my lyues ende 833

Ther I was fostred / of a child ful smal 834
 Til I be deed / my lyf ther wol I lede
 A wydwe clene / in body / herte and al
 ffor sith I yaf/ to yow my maydenhede 837
 And am youre trewe wyf/ it is no drede
 God shilde / swich a lordes wyf to take
 Another man / to housbonde / or to make 840

And of youre newe wyf / god of his grace	841
So graunte yow wele and prosperitee	
ffor I wol gladly / yelden hire my place	
In which that I was blisful wont to bee	844
ffor sith it liketh yow / my lord quod shee	
That whilom weren / al myn hertes reste	
That I shal goon / I wol goon whan yow leste	847
But ther as ye me profre / swich dowaire	848
As I first broghte / it is wel in my mynde	
It were my wrecched clothes no thyng faire	
The whiche to me / were hard now for to fynde	851
O goode god / how gentil and how kynde	
Ye semed / by youre speche / and youre visage	
The day / that maked was oure mariage	854
But sooth is seyde / algate I fynde it trewe	[leaf 102] 855
ffor in effect' it preeued is on me	
Loue is noght' oold / as whan þat it is newe	
But certes lord / for noon aduersitee	858
To dyen in the cas / it shal nat bee	
That euere / in word or werk / I shal repente	
That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente	861
My lord ye woot/ that in my fadres place	862
Ye dide me streepe / out of my poure weede	
And richely / me cladden of youre grace	
To yow broghte I noght elles / out of drede	865
But feith and nakednesse / and maydenhede	
And heere agayn / my clothyng I restoore	
And eek / my weddyng ryng/ for euere more	868
The remenant of youre Iueles redy be	869
In with youre chambre / dar I saufly sayn	
Naked / out of my fadres hous quod she	
I cam / and naked moot I turne agayn	872

Al youre plesance / wol I folwen fayn
 But yet I hope / it be nat youre entente
 That I smoklees / out of youre paleys wente 875

Ye koude nat doon / so dishoneste a thyng/ 876
 That thilke wombe / in which youre children leye
 Sholde biforn the peple / in my walkyng/
 Be seyn al bare / wherfore I yow preye 879
 Lat me / nat lyk a worm / go by the weye
 Remembre yow / myn owene lord so deere
 I was youre wyf / though I vnworthy weere 882

Wherfore / in gerdon of my maydenhede 883
 Which þat I broghte / and noghit agayn I bere
 As voucheth sauf / to yeue me / to my meede
 But swich a smok^{as I was wont to were} 886
 That I ther-with^{.i. comere} may wrye the wombe of here
 That was youre wyf / and heer take I my leue
 Of yow myn owene lord / lest I yow greue 889

¶ The smok quod he / that thou hast on thy bak 890
 Lat it be stille / and bere it forth with thee
 But wel vnnethes / thilke word he spak^{as I was wont to were}
 But wente his way / for routhe and for pitce 893
 Biforn the folk/ hir seluen strepeth she
 And in hir smok/ with heed / and foot / al bare
 Toward hir fader hous / forth is she fare 896

¶ The folk hire folwe / wepynge in hir weye [leaf 102, back]
 And ffortune ay they cursen / as they goon
 But she fro wepyng^{as I was wont to were} kepte hire eyen dreye
 Ne in this tyme / word ne spak she noon 900
 Hir fader / that this tidynge herde anon
 Curseth the day / and tyme that nature
 Shoope hym / to been a lyues creature 903

ffor out of doute / this olde poure man	904
Was euere / in suspect' of hir mariage	
ffor euere he demed / sith that it bigan	
That whan the lord / fulfild hadde his corage	907
Hym wolde thynke / it were a disparage	
To his estaat / so lowe for talighite	
And voyden hire / as soone as euer he myghite	910
Agayns his doghter / hastiliche goth he	911
ffor he by noyse of folk / knew hire comynge	
And with hire olde coote / as it myghte be	
He couered hire / ful sorwefully wepynge	914
But on hire body / myghite he it nat brynge	
ffor rude was the clooth / and she moore of age	
By dayes fele / than at hire mariage	917
¶ Thus with hire fader / for a certeyn space	918
Dwelleth this flour / of wyfly pacience	
That neither / by hire wordes / ne hire face	
Biforn the folk / ne eek in hire absence	921
Ne shewed she / that hire was doon offence	
Ne of hire heighe estaat. no remembraunce	
Ne hadde she / as by hire contenaunce	924
No wonder is / for in hire grete estaat	925
Hire goost was euere / in pleyn humylitee	
No tendre mouth / noon herte delicaat	
No pompe / no semblant of roialtee	928
But ful of pacient benyngnytee	
Discreet' and pridelees / ay honorable	
And to hire housbonde / euere meke and stable	931
¶ Men speke of Iob / and moost for his humblesse	932
As clerkes whan hem list konne wel endite	
Namely of men / but as in soothfastnesse	
Though clerkes / preise wommen but a lite	935

Ther kan no man / in humblesse hym acquite
 As womnan kan / ne been half so trewe
 As wommen been / but it be falle of newe 938

[PART VI.]

¶ ffor Boloigne / is this Erl of Pavyk' come [leaf 108] 939
 Of which the fame vp sprang' to moore and lesse
 And in the peples eres / alle and some
 Was kouth eek / that a newe Markysesse 942
 He with hym broghte / in swich pompe and richesse
 That neuere was ther seyn / with mannes eye
 So noble array / in al Westlumbardy 945

¶ The Markys / which that shoope and knew al this 946
 Er that this Erl was come / sente his message
 ffor thilke / sely poure Grisildis
 And she with humble herte / and glad visage 949
 Nat with no swollen thought' in hire corage
 Cam at his heste / and on hire knees hire sette
 And reuerently / and wisely she hym grette 952

¶ Grisilde quod he / my wyl is outrelly 953
 This mayden / that shal wedded been to me
 Receiued be / to morwe as roially
 As it possible is / in myn hous to be 956
 And eek / that euery wight in his degree
 Haue his estaat' in sitting' and seruyse
 And heigh plesaunce / as I kan best deuyse 959

¶ I haue no wommen / suffisaunt certayn 960
 The chambres / for tarraye in ordinaunce
 After my lust' and therfore wolde I fayn
 That thyn were / al swich manere gouernance 963
 Thou knowest eek' of old al my plesaunce
 Thogh thyn array be badde and yuel biseye
 Do thou thy deuoir / at the leeste weye 966

- ¶ Nat oonly lord / that .I. am glad quod she 967
 To doon youre lust but .I. desire also
 Yow for to serue / and plesse in my degree
 With outen feynting and shal eueremo 970
 Ne neuere / for no wele / ne no wo
 Ne shal the goost withInne myn herte stente
 To loue yow best with al my trewe entente 973
- And with that word / she gan the hous to dighte 974
 And tables for to sette / and beddes make
 And peyned hire / to doon al that she myghte
 Preyinge the chambres / for goddes sake 977
 To hasten hem / and faste swepe and shake
 And she / the mooste seruysable of alle
 Hath euery chambre arrayed / and his halle 980
- ¶ Abouten vndren / gan this Erl alighte [leaf 103, back] 981
 That with him broghte / thise noble children tweye
 ffor which the peple / ran to seen the sighte
 Of hire array / so richely biseye 984
 And thanne at erst amonges hem they seye
 That Walter was no fool / thogh þat hym leste
 To chaunge his wyf / for it was for the beste 987
- ffor she is fairer / as they deemen alle 988
 Than is Grisilde / and moore tendre of age
 And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholde falle
 And moore plesant. for hire heigh lynage 991
 Hir brother eek / so faire was of visage
 That hem to seen / the peple hath caught plesaunce
 Commendynge now / the Markys gouernaunce 994
- O Stormy peple / vnsad / and euere vntrewe ¶ Auctor
 Ay vndiscreet and chaungynge as a vane
 Delitynge euere / in rumbal that is newe
 flor lyk the moone / ay wexe ye and wane 998

Ay ful of clappyng' deere ynogh a Iane
 Youre doom is fals / youre constance yuele preeueth
 A ful greet fool / is he / þat on yow leeueth 1001

Thus seyden sadde folk/ in that Citee 1002
 Whan that the peple / gazed vp and down
 ffor they were glad / right for the noueltee
 To han / a newe lady of hir toun 1005
 Namore of this / make I now mencion
 But to Grisilde agayn / wol I me dresse
 And telle / hir constance / and hir bisynesse 1008

¶ ful bisy was Grisilde / in euery thyng 1009
 That to the feeste / was apertinent
 Right noght was she abayst of hire clothyng'
 Thogh it were rude / and somdeel eek to-rent 1012
 But with glad cheere / to the yate is she went
 With oother folk to greete the Markysesse
 And after that dooth forth hire bisynesse 1015

With so glad chiere / hise gestes she receyueth 1016
 And so konnyngly / euerich in his degree
 That no defeaute / no man aperceyueth
 But ay they wondren / what she myghte bee 1019
 That in so poure array was for to see
 And koude / swich honour and reuerence
 And worthily / they preisen hire prudence 1022

In al this meene while / she ne stente [leaf 104] 1023
 This mayde / and eek hir brother to commende
 With al hir herte / in ful benyngne entente
 So wel / þat no man koude hir pris amende 1026
 But atte laste / whan þat thise lordes wende
 To sitten down to mete / he gan to calle
 Grisilde / as she was bisy in his halle 1029

- ¶ Grisilde quod he / as it were in his pley 1030
 How liketh thee my wyf/ and hire beautee ?
 Right wel quod she my lord / for in good fey
 A fairer/ saugh I neuere noon than she 1033
 I prey to god / yeue hire prosperitee
 And so hope I / that he wol to yow sende
 Plesance ynogh / vn-to youre lyues ende 1036
- O thyng biseke I yow / and warne also [*Latin note, p. 402*] 1037
 That ye ne prikke / with no tormentyng
 This tendre mayden / as ye han doon mo
 ffor she is fostred / in hire norissyng 1040
 Moore tendrely / and to my supposyng
 She koude nat/ aduersitee endure
 As koude / a poure fostred creature 1043
- ¶ And whan this Walter / saugh hire pacience 1044
 Hir glad chiere / and no malice at al
 And he so ofte / had doon to hire [offence]
 And she ay sad / and constant as a wal 1047
 Continuyng euere / hire Innocence oueral
 This sturdy Markys / gan his herte dresse
 To rewen / vp on hire wyfly stedfastnesse 1050
- ¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he 1051
 Be now namoore agast ne yuele apayed
 I haue thy feith / and thy benyngnytee
 As wel / as euere womman was assayed 1054
 In greet estaat, and pourelliche arrayed
 Now knowe I goode wyf / thy stedfastnesse
 And hire in armes took / and gan hire kesse 1057
- ¶ And she for wonder/ took of it no keepe 1058
 She herde nat / what thyng he to hire seyde
 She ferde / as she had stert out of a sleep
 Til she / out of hire mazednesse abreyde 1061

Grisilde quod he / by god that for vs deyde
 Thou art my wyf / noon oother I haue
 Ne neuere hadde / as god my soule saue 1064

¶ This is thy doghter / which thou hast supposed [r104, b1]
 To be my wyf / that oother feithfully
 Shal be myn heir / as I haue ay supposed
 Thou bare hym / in thy body trewely 1068
 At Boloigne / haue I kept hem priuely
 Taak hem agayn / for now maystow nat seye
 That thou hast lorn / noon of thy children tweye 1071

And folk / that ootherweys / han seyde of me 1072
 I warne hem wel / þat I haue doon this deede
 ffor no malice / ne for no crueltee
 But for tassaye / in thee thy wommanheede 1075
 And nat to sleen my children / god forbeede
 But for to kepe hem / pryuely and stille
 Til I thy purpos knewe / and al thy wille 1078

¶ Whan she this herle / aswowne doun she falleth 1079
 ffor pitous Ioye / and after hire swownynge
 She bothe hire yonge children / vn-to hire calleth
 And in hire Armes / pitously wepynge 1082
 Embraceth hem / and tendrely kissynge
 fful lyk a mooder / with hire salte teeres
 She bathed / bothe hire visage and hire heeres 1085

¶ O which a pitous thyng it was to se 1086
 Hir swownynge. and hire humble voys to heere
 Grauntmery lord / that thanke I yow quod she
 That ye han saued me my children deere 1089
 Now rekke I neuere / to been deed right heere
 Sith I stonde in youre loue / and in youre grace
 No fors of deeth / ne whan my spirit pace 1092

¶ O tendre / o deere / o yonge children myne	1093
Yourc woful mooder / wende stedfastly	
That crueel houndes / or som foul vermyne	
Hadde eten yow / but god of his mercy	1096
And youre benyngne fader / tendrely	
Hath doon yow kept and in that same stounde	
Al sodeynly / she swapte adoun to grounde	1099
And in hire swough / so sadly holdeth she	1100
Hire children two / whan she gan hem tembrace	
That with greet sleighte / and greet difficultee	
The children / from hire arm they gonne arace	1103
O many a teere / on many a pitous face	
Doun ran / of hem þat stooden hire bisyde	
Vnnethe abouten hire / myghte they abyde	1106
¶ Walter hire gladeth / and hire sorwe slaketh	[leaf 105]
She riseth vp abaysed / from hire trañce	
And euery wight / hire ioye and feeste maketh	
Til she / hath caught agayn hire contenañce	1110
Walter hire dooth / so feithfully plesañce	
That it was deyntee / for to seen the cheere	
Bitwixe hem two / now they been met yfeere	1113
¶ Thise ladyes / whan that they hir tyme say	1114
Han taken hire / and in to chambre gon	
And strepen hire / out of hire rude array	
And in a clooth of gold / þat brighte shoon	1117
With a coroune / of many a richie stoon	
Vp on hire heed / they in to halle hire broghte	
And ther she was / honored as hire oghte	1120
Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende	1121
ffor euery man and womman dooth his myght	
This day / in murthe and reuel to dispende	
Til on the welkne / shoon the sterres lyght	1124

ffor moore solempne / in euery mannes syghit
 This feste was / and gretter of costage
 Than was / the reuel / of hire mariage 1127

¶ fful many a yeer / in heigh prosperitee 1128
 Lyuen thise two / in concord and in reste
 And richely / his doghter maryed he
 Vn-to a lord / oon of the worthieste 1131
 Of al Ytaille / and thanne in pees and reste
 His wyues fader / in his court he kepeth
 Til that the soule / out of his body crepeth 1134

His sone / succedeth in his heritage 1135
 In reste and pees / after his fader day
 And fortunat was eek / in mariage
 Al putte he nat his wyf / in greet assay 1138
 This world is nat so strong / it is no nay
 As it hath been / of olde tymes yoore
 And herkneþ / what this Auctour seith thierfoore 1141

¶ This storie is seyd / nat for that wyues sholde [Latin note,
 p. 402]
 ffolwen Grisilde / as in humylitee
 ffor it were inportable / though they wolde
 But for that euery wight / in his degree 1145
 Sholde be constant in aduersitee
 As was Grisilde / therfore petrak writeth
 This storie / which with heigh stile he enditeth 1148

ffor sith a womman / was so pacient [leaf 105, back]
 Vn-to a mortal man / wel moore vs oghte
 Receyuen al in gree / that god vs sent
 ffor greet skile is / he preeue that he wroghte 1152
 But he / ne tempteth no mau / that he boghte
 As seith seint Iame / if ye his pistel rede
 He preeueth folk al day / it is no drede 1155

And suffreth vs / as for oure excercise	1156
With sharpe scourges / of Aduersitee	
ful ofte / to be bete in sondry wise	
Nat for to know oure wyl / for certes he ^e	1159
Er we were born / knew oure freletee	
And for oure beste / is al his gouernaunce	
Lat vs thanne lyue / in vertuous suffraunce	1162
¶ But o word lordynges / herkneth er I go	
It were ful hard / to fynde now a dayes	1163
In al a toun / Grisildis / thre or two	
ffor if þat they were put to swiche assayes	1166
The gold of hem / hath now so badde alayes	
With bras / þat thogh the coyne be fair at eye	
It wolde rather / breste atwo than plye	1169
ffor which beere / for the wyues loue of Bathe	
Whos lyf and al hire secte god mayntene	1170
In heigh maistrie / and elles were it scathe	
I wol with lusty herte / fressh and grene	1173
Seyn yow a song ^e to glade yow I wene	
And lat vs stynte / of earnestful matere	
Herkneth my song ^e that seith in this manere	1176

¶ Lenuoy de Chaucer 𐝱

G risilde is deed / and eek hire pacience	
And bothe atones / buried in Ytaille	
ffor which I crie / in open audience	1179
No wedded man / so hardy be tassaillo	
His wyues pacience / in hope to fynde	
Grisildis / for in certain he shal faille	1182

O noble wyues / ful / of heigh prudence	
Lat noon humylitee / youre tonge naill	
Ne lat no clerk/ haue cause or diligence	1185
To write of yow / a storie of swich meruaille	
As of Grisildis / pacient and kynde	
Lest Chichiuache / yow swelwe in hire entraille	1188
 ffolweth Ekko / that holdeth no silence	[leaf 106]
But euere answereth / at the countretaille	
Beth nat bidaffed for youre Innocence	1191
But sharply / taak on yow the gouernaille	
Emprenteth wel this lessoñ in youre mynde	
ffor commune profit sith it may auaille	1194
 Ye Archiwyues / stondeth at defense	
Syn ye be strong as is a greet Camaille	
Ne suffreth nat/ þat men yow doon offense	1197
And sklendre wyues / fieble as in bataille	
Beth egre / as is a Tygre yond in Ynde	
Ay clappeth as a Mille / I yow consaille	1200
 Ne dreed hem nat doth hem no reuerence	
ffor though thyn housbonde / armed be in maille	
The arwes / of thy crabbed eloquence	1203
Shal perce his brest/ and eek' his Auentaille	
In Ialousie / I rede eek' thou hym bynde	
And thou shalt make hym couche as doth a quaille	1206
 If thou be fair/ ther folk been in presence	
Shewe thou thy visage / and thyn apparaille	
If thou be foul / be fre of thy dispence	1209
To gete thee freendes / ay do thy trauaille	
Be ay of chiere / as light as leef on lynde	
And lat hym care <i>and</i> wepe / and wryng <i>and</i> waille	1212

SIDE-NOTES TO CLERK'S TALE, ELLESMERE MS.

(From Petrarch's Latin original: see the Society's *Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*.)

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 404, l. 40. ¶ Est ad ytalie latus occiduū Vesulus ex ap-
penini Iugis mons altissimus qui vertice nebula superans liquido
sese ingerit etheri Mons suapte / nobilis natura padi ortu nobilis-
simus qui latere fonte lapsus exiguo Orientem contra solem fertur
&cetera [MS, leaf 92.]

p. 405, l. 57. ¶ Inter cetera ad radicem Vesuli terra saluciarum
vicis & Castellis. [MS, leaf 92.]

p. 409, l. 197. ¶ fuit haut procul a palacio &cetera. [MS,
leaf 94.]

p. 412, l. 281. ¶ Vt expeditis curis alijs ad videndum domini
sui sponsam cum puellis comitibus prepararet/ [MS, leaf 95.]

p. 412, l. 295. ¶ quum Walterus cogitabundus cedens eamque
compellans nomine. [MS, leaf 95.]

p. 414, l. 337. ¶ Et insolito tanti hospitis aduentu stupidam
inuenit. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 344. ¶ Et patri tuo placet inquit & mihi vt vxor
mea sis / et credo idipsum tibi placeat/ sed habeo ex te querere &
cetera. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 356. ¶ sine vlla frontis aut verbi inpugnacione.
[MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 358. ¶ Nil ego vnquam sciens nedum faciam set
eciam cogitabo quod contra animum tuum sit/ nec tu aliquid
facies / et si me mori iusseris quod moleste feram &cetera. [MS,
leaf 95, back.]

p. 415, l. 372. ¶ dehinc/ ne quid reliquiarum fortune veteris
nouam inferat in domum / nudari eam iusserit/ [MS, leaf 96.]

p. 416, l. 400. ¶ Atque apud omnes supra fidem cara & vene-
rabilis facta est/ vix quod hijs ipsis qui illius originem nouerant
persuaderi posset Ianicule natam esse tantis vite / tantis morum
decor ea verborum grauitas atque dulcedo quibus omnium animos
nexu sibi magni amoris astruxerat / [MS, leaf 96.]

p. 416, l. 421. ¶ sic Walterus humili quidem / set/ insigni ac
prospero matrimonio honestatis summa dei in pace & cetera.
[MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 416, l. 425. ¶ *quodque eximiam virtutem tanta sub inopia latitantem tam perspicaciter deprendisset/ vulgo prudentissimus habebatur.* [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 416, l. 428. ¶ *Neque vero solers sponsa muliebria tantum ac domestica / sed vbi res posceret publica eciam subibat officia.* [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 417, l. 435. ¶ *Viro absente / lites patrie / nobilium discordias dirimens atque componens tam grauibus responsis tanta que maturitate, & Iudicii equitate vt omnes ad salutem publicam demissa celo feminam predicarent/* [MS, leaf 97, back.]

p. 417, l. 449. ¶ *Ceperit vt sit interdum walterum cum iam ablactata esset infantula mirabilis quedam quam laudabilis cupiditas satis expertam care fidem coniugis experiendi alcius & iterum atque iterum retemptandi.* [MS, leaf 97.]

p. 422, l. 603. ¶ *par alacritas atque sedalitas solitum obs[e]-quium / idem amor nulla filie mencio.* [MS, leaf 98, back.]

p. 422, l. 610. ¶ *transiuerant hoc in statu anni iiii^m. dum ecce grauida &cetera.* [MS, leaf 99.]

p. 423, l. 624. ¶ *Et olim audisti populum meum egre nostrum ferre connubium &cetera.* [MS, leaf 99.]

p. 424, l. 664. ¶ *ffac sen[ten]ciam tibi placere quod moriar volens moriar.* [MS, leaf 99, back.]

p. 426, l. 722. ¶ *ceperit sensim de Waltero decolor fama creb[r]escere.* [MS, leaf 100.]

p. 436, l. 1037. ¶ *Vnum bona fide precor ac moneo ne hanc/ illis aculeis agites quibus alteram agitasti / namque & iunior & delicacius nutrita est/ pati quantum ego vt reor non valeret/* [MS, leaf 104.]

p. 439, l. 1142. ¶ *Hanc historiam stilo nuno alto retexere visum fuit/ non tum ideo vt matronas nostri temporis ad imitandam huius vxoris pacienciam / que inimitabilis videtur / quam vt legentes ad imitandam saltem femine constanciam excitarent/. Vt que hec viro suo prestitit/ hoc prestare d[e]o nostro audeat/ quilibet/ vt Iacobus ait apostolus / Intemptator sit/ malorum & ipse neminem temptat/ probat tamen & sepe nos multis ac grauibus flagellis exerceri sinit/ non vt animum nostrum sciatur/ quem sciuit, antequam crearemur &cetera.* [MS, leaf 105.]

APPENDIX TO GROUP E, § 2.

[! *Original, but rejected, End-Link to the Clerk's Tale, perhaps following l. 1162, with which the paraphrase of Petrarch's Latin ends, or l. 1169.*]

¶ Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost' 𐀀

THis worthy clerk' whan ended was his tale
 Oure hoost seyde / and swoor by goddes bones
 Me were leuere / than a barel ale
 My wyf at hoom / had herd this legende ones 4
 This is a gentil tale / for the nones
 As to my purpos / wiste ye my wille
 But thyng' þat wol nat be / lat it be stille 𐀀 7

¶ Heere endeth the tale / of the Clerk' of Oxenford'

¶ The prologe of the Marchantes tale 𐞂 [leaf 106, back]

Wepynge and waylyng care and oother sorwe
 I knowe ynogh / on euen and a morwe
 Quod the Marchant and so doon othere mo
 That wedded been / I trowe that it be so 1216
 ffor wel I woot it fareth so with me
 I have a wyf / the worste that may be
 ffor thogh the feend / to hire ycoupled were
 She wolde hym ouermacche / I dar wel swero 1220
 What sholde I yow reherce in special
 Hir hye malice / she is a shrewe at al
 Ther is a longe and large difference
 Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience 1224
 And of my wyf / the passyng crueltee
 Were I vnbounden / al so moot I thee
 I wolde neuere eft comen in the snare
 We wedded men / lyue in sorwe and care 1228
 Assaye who so wole / and he shal fynde
 I seye sooth / by seint Thomas of ynde
 As for the moore part I sey nat alle
 God shilde / that it sholde so bifalle 1232
 ¶ A good sire hoost / I haue ywedded bee
 Thise Monthes two / and moore nat pardee
 And yet I trowe / he that al his lyue
 Wyfles hath been / though þat men wolde him ryue 1236
 Vn-to the herte / ne koude in no manere
 Tellen so muchel / sorwe / as I now heere
 Koude tellen / of my wyues cursednesse
 ¶ Now quod our hoost . Marchant so god yow blesse 1240
 Syn ye so muchel / knowen of that Art
 fful hertely / I pray yow telle vs part
 ¶ Gladly quod he / but of myn owene soore
 ffor soory herte / I telle may namoore 1244

[Painting of the Merchant]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Marchantes tale 𐞂

W Hilom ther was dwellynge in Lumbardye
 A worthy knyght þat born was of Pavye
 In which he lyued / in greet prosperitee
 And sixty yer / a wyfles man was hee
 And folwed ay his bodily delyt
 On wommen / ther as was his appetyt
 As doon thise fooles / that been seculer leaf 107]
 And whan that he / was passed sixty yer 1252
 Were it for hoolynesse / or for dotage
 I kan nat seye / but swich a greet corage
 Hadde this knyght to been a wedded man
 That day and nyght / he dooth al that he kan 1256
 Tespier / where he myghte wedded be
 Preyinge oure lord / to granten him þat he s
 Myghte ones knowe / of thilke blisful lyf
 That is bitwixe / an housbonde / and his wyf / 1260
 And for to lyue / vnder that hooly boond
 With which þat first god / man and womman bond
 Noon oother lyf seyde he / is worth a bene
 for wedlok / is so esy / and so clene 1264
 That in this world / it is a Paradys
 Thus seyde this olde knyght / þat was so wys
 ¶ And certeinly / as sooth / as god is kyng
 To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng 1268
 And namely / whan a man / is oold and hoor
 Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor
 Thanne sholde he take / a yong wyf and a feir
 On which / he myghte / engendren hym an heir 1272

And lede his lyf in ioye and in solas
 Where as thise bachelers / synge allas
 Whan that they fynden / any aduersitee
 In loue / which nys / but chilysshe vanytee 1276
 And trewely / it sit wel to be so
 That bachelers / haue often peyne and wo
 On brotel ground they buyde / and brotelnesse
 They fynde / whan they wene sikernes 1280
 They lyue / but as a bryd / or as a beest
 In libertee / and vnder noon arreest
 Ther as a wedded man / in his estaat
 Lyueth a lyf blisful and ordinaat 1284
 Vnder this yok of mariage ybounde
 Wel may his herte / in ioye and blisse habounde
 ffor who kan be / so buxom as a wyf
 Who is so trewe / and eek so ententyf 1288
 To kepe hym syk and hool / as is his make
 ffor wele or wo / she wole hym nat forsake
 She nys nat wery / hym to loue and serue
 Thogh þat he lye bedrede / til he sterue 1292
 And yet somme clerkes seyn / it nys nat so
 Of whiche / he Theofraste is oon of tho
 What force / though Theofraste liste lye
 Ne take no wyf quod he / for housbondrye 1296
 As for to spare / in houshold thy dispence
 A trewe seruant dooth moore diligence
 Thy good to kepe / than thyn owene wyf [leaf 107, back]
 ffor she wol clayme / half part al hir lyf 1300
 And if thou be syk so god me saue
 Thy verray freendes / or a trewe knaue
 Wol kepe thee bet than she þat waiteth ay
 After thy good / and hath doon many a day 1304
 And if thou take a wyf / vn-to thyn hoold
 ful lightly / maystow been a Cokewold
 This sentence / and an hundred thynges worse
 Writeth this man / ther god his bones corse 1308

But take no kepe / of al swich vanytee
 Deffie Theofraste / and herke me
 ¶ A wyf / is goddes yifte verrailly [Latin note, p. 477]
 Alle othere manere yiftes hardily 1312
 As londes / rentes / pasture / or commune
 Or moebles / alle been yiftes of ffortune // dona fortune
 That passen / as a shadwe vpon a wal
 But dredelees / if pleynly speke I shal 1316
 A wyf wol laste / and in thyn hous endure
 Wel lenger than thee list / parauenture
 ¶ Mariage is / a ful greet sacrament
 He / which þat hath no wyf / I holde hym shent' 1320
 He lyueth helplees / and al desolat
 I speke of folk in seculer estaat
 And herke why / I sey nat this for noght
 That womman is / for mannes helpe ywroght' 1324
 The hye god / whan he hadde Adam maked
 And saugh him al allone / bely naked
 God of his grete goodnesse / seyde than [Latin note, p. 477]
 Lat vs now make an helpe vn-to this man 1328
 Lyk to hym self and thanne he made him Eue
 Heere may ye se / and heer-by may ye preue
 That wyf is mannes helpe / and his confort
 His Paradys terrestre / and his disport' 1332
 So buxom / and so vertuous is she
 They moste nedes / lyue in vnitee
 O flessch they been / and o flessch as I gesse
 Hath but oon herte / in wele and in distresse 1336
 ¶ A wyf /^s a Seinte marie benedicite
 How myghte a man / han any aduersitee
 That hath a wyf / certes I kan nat seye
 The blisse / which þat is bitwixe hem tweye 1340
 Ther may no tonge telle / or herte thynke
 If he be poure / she helpeth hym to swynke
 She kepeth his good / and wasteth neuer a deel
 Al that hire housbonde lust hire liketh weel 1344

She seith not ones nay / whan he seith ye
 Do this seith he / al redy sire seith she
 O blisful ordre of wedlok precious [leaf 108]
 Thou art so murye / and eek so vertuous 1348
 And so commended / and appreued eek
 That every man / þat halt hym worth a leek /
 Vp on his bare knees / oughte al his lyf /
 Thanken his god / þat hym hath sent a wyf / 1352
 Or elles preye to god / hym for to sende
 A wyf / to laste / vn to his lyues ende
 ffor thanne his lyf / is set in sikernesse
 He may nat be deceyued as I gesse 1356
 So þat he werke / after his wyues reede
 [.

 1360
 no gap in the MS.]
 ¶ Lo how þat Iacob / as thise clerkes rede [Latin note, p. 477]
 By good conseil / of his mooder Rebekke
 Boond the kydes skyn / aboute his nekke 1364
 Thurgh which / his fadres benyson he wan
 ¶ Lo Iudith / as the storie eek telle kan [Latin note, p. 477]
 By wys conseil / she goddes peple kepte
 And slow hym Olofernus / whil he slepte 1368
 ¶ Lo Abigayl / by good conseil / how she [Latin note, p. 477]
 Saued hir housbonde Nabal / whan þat he^s
 Sholde han be slayn / and looke Ester also [Latin note, p. 477]
 By good conseil / delyuered out of wo 1372
 The peple of god / and made hym Mardochee
 Of Assuere / enhaunced for to be
 ¶ Ther nys no thyng / in gree superlatyf [Latin note, p. 477]
 As seith Senek^t aboue an humble wyf 1376
 ¶ Suffre thy wyues tonge / as Catoñ bit [Latin note, p. 477]
 She shal comande / and thou shalt suffren it
 And yet she wole obeye of curteisye
 A wyf is kepere / of thyn housbondrye [Latin note, p. 477]

Wel may the sike man / biwaille *and* wepe
 Ther as ther nys no wyf / the hous to kepe
 I warne thee / if wisely / thou wolt wirche [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 Loue wel thy wyf^f as crist loued his chirche 1384
 If thou louest thy self^f thou louest thy wyf / [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 No man hateth his flessch / but in his lyf^s
 He fostreth it^f and therfore bidde I thee
 Cherisse thy wyf / or thou shalt neuere thee 1388
 Housbonde and wyf^f what so men iape or pleye
 Of worldly folk / holden the siker weye
 They been so knyht ther may noon harm bityde
 And namely / vp on the wyues syde 1392
 for which this Ianuarie / of whom I tolde
 Considered hath / inwith hise dayes olde
 The lusty lyf / the vertuous quyete
 That is in mariage hony sweete 1396
 And for hise freendes / on a day he sente
 To tellen hem theffect of his entente
With face sad / his tale he hath hem toold^f [*leaf 108, bk*]
 He seyde freendes / I am hoor and oold^f 1400
 And almoost god woot^f on my pittes brynke
 Vp on the soule / somewhat moste I thynke
 I haue my body / folily despended
 Blessed be god / that it shal been amended 1404
 ffor I wol be / certeyn a wedded man
 And that anoon / in al the haste I kan
 Vn to som mayde / fair / and tendre of age
 I prey yow / shapeth for my mariage 1408
 Al sodeynly / for I wol nat abyde
 And I wol fonde / tespien on my syde
 To whom / I may be wedded hastily
 But for as muche / as ye been mo than I 1412
 Ye shullen rather / swich a thyng espyen
 Than I / and where me best were to allyen
 ¶ But o thyng^f warne I yow / my freendes deere
 I wol noon oold wyf han / in no manere 1416

She shal nat passe twenty yeer certayn
 Oold fiasch and yong' flessch / wolde I haue fayn
 Bet is quod he / a pyk than a pykerel
 And bet than olde boef' is the tendre veel 1420
 I wol no womman / thritty yeer of age
 It is but benestraw / and greet forage
 And eek / thise olde wydwes / god it woot
 They konne / so muchel craft on Wades boot 1424
 So muchel broken harm / whan þat hem leste
 That with hem / sholde I neuere lyue in reste
 ffor sondry scoles / maken sotile clerkis
 Womman of manye scoles / half a clerk' is 1428
 But certeynly / a yong' thyng' may men gye
 Right as men may / warm wex with handes plye
 Wherefore / I sey yow pleyntly / in a clause
 I wol noon oold wyf han / for this cause 1432
 ffor if so were / þat I hadde swich myschaunce
 That I in hire / ne koude han no plesaunce
 Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in Auoutrye
 And streight vn-to the deuel / whan I dye 1436
 Ne children / sholde I none vp on hire geten
 Yet were me leuere / þat houndes had me eten
 Than þat myn heritage sholde falle
 In straunge hand / and this I telle yow alle 1440
 I dote nat I woot the cause why?
 Men sholde wedde / and forthermoore woot I
 Ther speketh / many a man of mariage
 That woot namoore of it than woot my page 1444
 ffor whiche causes / man sholde take a wyf /
 Siththe / he may nat lyuen chaast his lyf /
 Take hym a wyf with greet deuocion [leaf 100]
 By cause / of leueful procreacion 1448
 Of children / to thonour of god aboue
 And nat oonly / for paramour or loue
 And for they sholde / leccherye eschue
 And yelde hir dettes / whan þat they ben due 1452

Or for that ech of hem / sholde helpen oother
 In meschief / as a suster shal the brother
 And lyue in chastitee / ful holily
 But sires by youre leue / that am nat I 1456
 ffor god be thanked / I dar make auaunt
 I feele my lymes / stark/ and suffisaunt
 To do / al that a man bilongeth to
 I woot my seluen best what I may do 1460
 Though I be hoor / I fare as dooth a tree
 That blometh / er þat fruyt ywoxen bee
 And blommy tree / nys neither drye ne deed
 I feele me / nowhere hoor / but on myn heed 1464
 Myn herte / and alle my lymes been as grene
 As laurer / thurgh the yeer / is for to sene
 And syn þat ye / han herd al myn entente
 I prey yow / to my wyl / ye wole assente 1468
Diuerse men / diuersely hym tolde
 Of mariage / manye ensamples olde
 Somme blamed it / somme preysed it certeyn
 But atte laste / shortly for to seyn 1472
 As al day / falleth altercaciõ
 Bitwixen freendes in disputisiõ
 Ther fil a stryf / bitwixe hise bretheren two
 Of whiche / that oon was cleped Placebo 1476
 Iustinus soothly / called was that oother
 ¶ Placebo seyde / o Ianuarie brother ¶ Placebo
 fful litel nede / hadde ye my lord so deere
 Conseil to axe / of any that is heere 1480
 But þat ye been / so ful of sapience
 That yow ne liketh / for youre heighe prudence
 To weyuen / fro the word of Salomon
 This word seyde he / vn to vs euerychon 1484
 Wirk alle thyng by conseil / thus seyde he
 And thanne / shaltow nat repente thee
 But though þat Salomon / spak swich a word
 Myn owene deere brother / and my lord 1488

So wysly / god my soule brynge at reste
 I holde / youre owene conseil is the beste
 ffor brother myn / of me taak this motyf
 I haue now been / a Court man al my lyf 1492
 And god it woot though I vnworthy be
 I haue stonden / in ful greet degree
 Abouten lordes / of ful heigh estaat [leaf 100, back]
 Yet hadde I neuere / with noon of hem debaat 1496
 I neuere hem contraried trewely
 I woot wel / that my lord kan moore than I
 What that he seith / I holde it ferme and stable
 I seye the same / or elles thyng semblable 1500
 A ful greet fool / is any conseilour
 That serueth any lord / of heigh honour
 That dar presume / or elles thenken it
 That his conseil / sholde passe his lordes wit 1504
 Nay / lordes been no fooles by my fay
 Ye han youre seluen / seyd heer to day
 So heigh sentence / so holily and weel
 That I consente / and conferme euerydeel 1508
 Your words alle / and youre opinioun
 By god / ther nys no man / in al this toun
 Nyn Ytaille / that koude bet han sayd
 Crist halt hym / of this conseil ful wel apayd 1512
 And trewely / it is an heigh corage
 Of any man / that stapen is in age
 To take a yong wyf by my fader kyn
 Your herte hangeth / on a ioly pyn 1516
 Dooth now in this matiere / right as yow leste
 ffor finally / I holde it for the beste
Iustinus / þat ay stille sat and herde ¶ Iustinus
 Right in this wise / he to Placebo answerde 1520
 Now brother myn / be pacient I preye
 Syn ye han seyð / and herkneþ what I seye
 ¶ Senek among hise othere wordes wyse
 Seith / þat a man oghte hym right wel auyse 1524

To whom / he yeueth his lond / or his catel
 And syn I ogh̃te / auyse me right wel
 To whom I yeue my good / away fro me
 Wel muchel moore / I ogh̃te auysed be 1528
 To whom I yeue my body / for alwey
 I warne yow wel / it is no childes pley
 To take a wyf with-outen auysement'
 Men moste enquire / this is myn assent' 1532
 Wher she be wys / or sobre / or dronkelewe
 Or proud / or elles ootherweys a shrewe
 A chidestere / or wastour of thy good
 Or riche / or poore / or elles mannyssh wood 1536
 Al be it so / that no man fynden shal
 Noon in this world / that trotteth hool in al
 Ne man ne beest/ which as men koude deuyse
 But nathelees / it ogh̃te ynough suffise 1540
 With any wyf/ if so were that she hadde
 Mo goode thewes / than hire vices badde
 And al this / axeth leyser / for tenquere [leaf 110]
 ffor god it woot I haue wept many a teere 1544
 fful pryuely / syn I haue had a wyf
 Preyse who so wole / a wedded mannes lyf
 Certein I fynde in it' but cost and care
 And obseruances / of alle blisses bare 1548
 And yet god woot my neighebores aboute
 And namely / of wominen many a route
 Seyn þat I haue / the mooste stedefast wyf
 And eek/ the mekeste oon / that bereth lyf 1552
 But I woot best' where wryngeth me my sho
 Ye mowe for me / right as yow liketh do
 Auyseth yow / ye been a man of age
 How that ye entren / in to mariage 1556
 And namely / with a yong wyf/ and a fair
 By hym þat made water / erthe / and air
 The yongeste man / þat is in al this route
 Is bisy ynough / to bryngen it aboute 1560

To han his wyf allone / trusteth me
 Ye shul nat plesen hire / fully yereþ thre
 This is to seyn / to doon hire ful plesance
 A wyf axeth / ful many an obseruaunce 1564
 I prey yow / þat ye be nat yuele apayd
 ¶ Wel quod this Ianuarie / and hastow ysayd
 Straw for thy Senek / and for thy prouerbes
 I counte nat a panyer ful of herbes 1568
 Of scole termes // wyser men than thou
 As thou hast herd / assenteden right now
 To my purpos / Placebo / what sey ye ?
 ¶ I seye / it is a cursed man quod he 1572
 That letteth matrimoigne sikerly
 And with that word / they rysen sodeynly
 And been assented / fully þat he sholde
 Be wedded / whanne hym list and where he wolde 1576
Heigh fantasye / and curious bisynesse
 ffro day to day / gan in the soule impresse
 Of Ianuarie / aboute his mariage
 Many fair shape / and many a fair visage 1580
 Ther passeth thurgh his herte / nyght by nyght
 And who so tooke a Mirour / poliished bryght
 And sette it in a commune Market place
 Thanne sholde he se / ful many a figure pace 1584
 By his Mirour / and in the same wyse
 Gan Ianuarie / inwith his thoght deuyse
 Of maydens / whiche þat dwellen hym bisyde
 He wiste nat / wher þat he myghte abyde 1588
 ffor if þat oon / haue beaute / in hir face
 Another stant so / in the peples grace
 ffor hire sadnesse / and hire benyngnytee (leaf 110, back)
 That of the peple / grettest voys hath she 1592
 And somme were riche / and hadden badde name
 But nathelees / bitwixe earnest and game
 He atte laste / apoynted hym on oon
 And leet alle othere / from his herte goon 1596

And chees hire / of his owene auctoritee
 for loue is blynd al day / and may nat see
 And whan that he was / in his bed ybrought
 He purtreied / in his herte and in his thoght 1600
 Hir fresshe beautee / and hir age tendre
 Hir myddel smal / hire armes longe and sklendre
 Hir wise gouernaunce / hir gentillesse
 Hir wommanly berynge / and hire sadnesse 1604
 And whan that he / on hire was condescended
 Hym thoughte / his choys myghte nat ben amended
 for whan þat he hym self / concluded hadde
 Hym thoughte / ech oother mannes wit so badde 1608
 That impossible / it were to repplye
 Agayn his choys / this was his fantasye
 Hise freendes sente he to / at his instaunce
 And preyed hem / to doon hym that plesaunce 1612
 That hastily / they wolden to hym come
 He wolde abregge hir labour alle and some
 Nedeth namoore / for hym to go ne ryde
 He was apoynted / ther he wolde abyde 1616
 ¶ Placebo cam / and eek hise freendes soone
 And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone
 That noon of hem / none Argumentes make
 Agayn the purpos / which þat he hath take 1620
 Which purpos / was pleasant to god seyde he
 And verray ground / of his prosperitee
 ¶ He seyde / ther was a mayden in the toun
 Which þat of beautee / hadde greet renoun 1624
 Al were it so / she were / of smal degree
 Suffiseth hym / hir yowthe / and hir beautee
 Which mayde he seyde / he wolde han to his wyf
 To lede in ese / and boolynesse his lyf 1628
 And thanked god / þat he myghte han hire al
 That no wight / his blisse parten shal
 And preyde hem / to laboure in this nede
 And shapen / þat he faille nat to spede 1632

ffor thanne he seyde / his spirit was at ese
 Thanne is quod he / no thyng' may me displese
 Saue o thyng' priketh in my conscience
 The which I wol reherce / in youre *presence* 1636
 ¶ I haue quod he / herd seyd ful yooore ago
 Ther may no man / *han* *parfite* blisses two
 This is to seye / in erthe and eek' in heuene [leaf-111]
 ffor though he kepe hym / fro the synnes seuene 1640
 And eek/ from euery branche of thilke tree
 Yet is ther/ so parfit felicittee
 And so greet ese / and lust in mariage
 That euere I am agast/ now in myn age 1644
 That I shal lede now / so myrie a lyf
 So delicat' with-outen wo and stryf
 That I shal haue / myn heuene in erthe heere
 ffor sith *þat* verray heuene / is boght so deere 1648
 With tribulacion/ and greet penance
 How sholde I thanne / *þat* lyue in swich plesance
 As alle wedded men / doon *with* hire wyuys
 Come to the blisse / ther crist eterne on lyue ys 1652
 This is my drede / and ye my bretheren tweye
 Assoilleth me / this question I preye
 Iustinus / which *þat* hated his folye ¶ Iustinus
 Answerde anon / right in his iaperye 1656
 And for he wolde / his longe tale abregge
 He wolde / noon auctoritee allegge
 But seyde sire / so ther be noon obstacle
 Oother than this / god of his hygh myracle 1660
 And of his hygh mercy / may so for yow wirche
 That er ye haue youre right' of hooly chirche
 Ye may repente / of wedded mannes lyf
 In which ye seyn / ther is no wo ne stryf 1664
 And elles god forbede / but he sente
 A wedded man / hym grace to repente
 Wel ofte / rather than a sengle man
 And therefore sire / the beste reed I kan 1668

Dispeire yow noght but haue in youre memorie
 Paraunter / she may be youre purgatorie
 She may be goddes meene / and goddes whippe
 Thanne shal youre soule / vp to heuene skippe 1672
 Swifter / than dooth an Arwe / out of the bowe
 I hope to god / her-after shul ye knowe
 That ther nys / no so greet felicitie
 In mariage / ne neuere mo shal bee 1676
 That yow shal lette / of youre sauacion
 So that ye vse / as skile is and reson
 The lustes of youre wyf attemprely
 And þat ye plesse hire nat to amorously 1680
 And þat ye kepe yow eek / from oother synne
 My tale is doon / for my wit is thynne
 Beth nat agast her-of / my brother deere
 But lat vs waden / out of this mateere 1684
 The wyf of Bathe / if ye han vnderstonde
 Of mariage / which ye haue on honde
 Declared hath ful wel / in litel space [leaf 111, back]
 ffareth now wel / god haue yow in his grace 1688
 And with this word / this Iustyn and his brother
 Han take hir leue / and ech of hem of oother
 ffor whan they saughe that it moste be
 They wroghten so / by sly and wys trettee 1692
 That she this mayden / which þat Mayus highȝe
 As hastily / as euere that she myghȝe
 Shal wedded be / vn-to this Ianuarie
 I trowe it were to longe yow to tarie 1696
 If I yow tolde / of euery scrit and bond
 By which / þat she was feffed in his lond
 Or for to herknen / of hir riche array
 But finally / ycomen is the day 1700
 That to the chirche / bothe be they went
 ffor to receyue the hooly sacrement
 forth comth the preest with stole aboute his nekke
 And bad hire be lyk to Sarra and Rebekke 1704

In wysdom and in trouthe of mariage
 And seyde hir orisons / as is vsage
 And croucheth hem / and bad god sholde hem blesse
 And made al siker ynogh / with hoolynesse 1708
 ¶ Thus been they wedded / with solempnitee
 And at the feeste / sitteth he and she
 With othere worthy folk vp on the deys
 Al ful of ioye and blisse is the paleys 1712
 And ful of Instrumentz / and of vitaille
 The moste deynteuous / of all Ytaille
 Biforn hem / stooden Instrumentz of swich soun
 That Orpheus / ne of Thebes Amphiouz 1716
 Ne maden neuere / swich a melodye
 ¶ At euery cours / thanne cam loud Mynstralcye
 That neuere tromped Ioab / for to heere
 Nor he Theodomas / yet half so cleere 1720
 At Thebes / whan the Citee was in doute
 Bacus / the wyn hem skynketh al aboute
 And Venus / laugheth vp-on euery wight
 ffor Ianuarie / was bicomme hir knyght 1724
 And wolde bothe / assayen his corage
 In libertee / and eek in mariage
 And with hire fyrbrond / in hire hand aboute
 Daunceth / biforn the bryde and al the route 1728
 And certainly / I dar right wel seyn this
 Ymeneus / that god of weddyng is
 Saugh neuere his lyf so myrie a wedded man
 Hoold thou thy pees / thou poete Marcian 1732
 That writest vs / that ilke weddyng murie
 Of hire Philologie / and hym Mercurie
 And of the songes / that the Muses songe [leaf 112]
 To smal is bothe thy penne / and eek thy tonge 1736
 ffor to descryuen / of this mariage
 Whan tendre youthe / hath wedded stoupyng age
 Ther is swich myrthe / þat it may nat be writen
 Assayeth it youre self / thanne may ye witen 1740

If that I lye or noon / in this matiere
 ¶ Mayus that sit / with so benyngne a chiere
 Hire to biholde / it semed fairye
 Queene Ester / looked neuere with swich an eye 1744
 On Assuer / so meke a look hath she
 I may yow nat deuysse / al hir beautee
 But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may
 That she was lyk / the brighte morwe of May 1748
 ffulfild / of alle beautee and plesaunce
 ¶ This Ianuarie / is rauysshed in a traunce
 At euery tyme / he looked on hir face
 But in his herte / he gan hire to manace 1752
 That he that nyght in Armes wolde hire streyne
 Harder / than euere Parys dide Eleyne
 But nathelees / yet hadde he greet pitee
 That thilke nyght offenden hire moste he 1756
 And thoughte allas / o tendre creature
 Now wolde god / ye myghte wel endure
 Al my corage / it is so sharpe and keene
 I am agast ye shul it nat susteene 1760
 But god forbede / þat I dide al my myght
 Now wolde god / þat it were woxen nyght
 And that the nyght wolde lasten eueremo
 I wolde / that al this peple were ago 1764
 And finally / he dooth al his labour
 As he best myghte / sauynge his honour
 To haste hem fro the mete / in subtil wyse
 ¶ The tyme cam / that resoñ was to ryse 1768
 And after that men daunce and drynken faste
 And spices / al aboute the hous they caste
 And ful of ioye and blisse is euery man
 All but a Squyer / highte Damyan 1772
 Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a day
 He was so rauysshed / on his lady May
 That for the verray peyne / he was ny wood
 Almoost he swelte / and swowned ther he stood 1776

So soore / hath Venus hurt hym *with* hire brond
 As *pat* she bar it' daunsynge in hire hond
 And to his bed / he wente hym hastily
 Namooore of hym / at this tyme speke [I] 1780
 But there I lete hym wepe ynogh and pleyne
 Til fresshe May / wol rewen on his peyne
O perilous fyr / that in the bedstraw bredeth ¶ Auctor
 O famulier foo / that his seruyce bedeth [leaf 112, bk] 1784
 O seruant traytour / false hoomly hewe
 Lyk to the naddre / in bosom sly vntrewe
 God shilde vs alle / from youre aqueyntaunce
 O Ianuarie / dronken in plesance 1788
 In mariage / se how thy Damyan
 Thyn owene squier / and thy born man
 Entendeth / for to do thee vileynye
 God graunte thee / thyn hoomly fo tespye 1792
 ffor in this world / nys worse pestilence
 Than hoomly foo / al day in thy presence
 ¶ Parfourned hath the sonne / his Ark' diurne
 No lenger / may the body of hym soiurne 1796
 On thorisonte / as in that latitude
 Night *with* his Mantel *pat* is derk' and rude
 Gan ouersprede the Hemysperie aboute
 ffor which / departed is / this lusty route 1800
 ffor Ianuarie / with thank on euery syde
 Hoom to hir hous / lustily they ryde
 Where as they doon hir thynges / as hem leste
 And whan they sye hir tyne / goon to reste 1804
 Soone after that' this hastif Ianuarie
 Wolde go to bedde / he wolde no lenger tarye
 He drynketh Ypocras / Clarree and Vernage
 Of spices hoote / tencreessen his corage 1808
 And many a letuarie / hath he ful fyn
 Swiche as the Monk' daun Constantyn
 Hath writen / in his book de coitu
 To eten hem alle / he nas no thyng eschu 1812

And to hise priuee freendes / thus seyde he
 ffor goddes loue / as soone as it may be
 Lat voyden al this hous / in curteys wyse
 And they han doon / right as he wol deuyse 1816
 Men drynken / and the trauers drawe anon
 The bryde / was broght a bedde / as stille as stoon
 And whan the bed / was with the preest yblessed
 Out of the chambre / hath euery wight hym dressed 1820
 And Ianuarie / hath faste in Armes take
 His fresshe May / his Paradys his make
 He lulleth hire / he kisseth hire ful ofte
 With thilke brustles / of his berd vnsofte 1824
 Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh / sharpe as brere
 ffor he was shaue al newe / in his manere
 He rubbeth hire / aboute hir tendre face
 And seyde thus / allas I moot trespace 1828
 To yow my spouse / and yow greetly offende
 Er tyme come / þat I wil down descende
 But nathelees / considereth this quod he [leaf 113]
 Ther nys no werkman / what so euere he be 1832
 That may bothe / werke wel and hastily
 This wol be doon at leyser parfitly
 It is no fors / how longe þat we pleye
 In trewe wedlok / wedded be we tweye 1836
 And blessed be the yok / þat we been Inne
 ffor in [oure] Actes / we mowe do no synne
 A man / may do no synne with his wyf
 Ne hurte hym seluen / with his owene knyft 1840
 ffor we han leue / to pleye vs by the lawe
 Thus laboureth he / til þat the day gan dawe
 And thanne he taketh a sope / in fyne clarrce
 And vpright in his bed / thanne sitteth he 1844
 And after that he sang ful loude and cleere
 And kiste his wyf / and made wantowne cheere
 He was al coltisshe / ful of ragerye
 And ful of Iargon / as a flekked pye 1848

The slakke skyn / aboute his nekke shaketh
 Whil þat he sang / so chaunteth he and craketh
 But god woot what þat May thoughte in hir herte
 Whan she hym saugh / vp sittynge in his sherte 1852
 In his nyght cappe / and with his nekke lene
 She preyseth nat his pleyying worth a bene
 Thanne seide he thus / my reste wol I take
 Now day is come / I may no lenger wake 1856
 And doun he leyde his heed / and sleepe til pryme
 And afterward / whan þat he saugh his tyme
 Vp ryseth Ianuario / but fresshe May
 Heeld hire chambre / vn-to the fourthe day 1860
 As vsage is / of wyues / for the beste
 ffor euery labour / som tyme moot han reste
 Or elles / longe may he nat endure
 This is to seyn / no lyues creature 1864
 Be it of fyssh / or bryd / or beest or man
 Now wol I speke / of woful Damyan
 That langwischeth for loue / as ye shul heere
 Therefore / I speke to hym in this manere 1868
 ¶ I seye / o sely Damyan allas ¶ Auctor
 Andswere to my demaunde / as in this cas
 How shaltow / to thy lady fresshe May
 Telle thy wo / she wole alwey seye nay 1872
 Eek if thou speke / she wol thy wo biwrewe
 God be thyn helpe / I kan no bettre seye
 ¶ This sike Damyan / in Venus fyr
 So brenneth / that he dyeth for desyr 1876
 ffor which / he putte his lyf in auenture
 No lenger myghte he / in this wise endure
 But priuely / a penner gan he borwe [leaf 115, back]
 And in a lettre / wroot he al his sorwe 1880
 In manere of a compleynt or a lay
 Vn-to his faire / fresshe lady May
 And in a purs of sylk / heng on his sherte
 He hath it put and leyde it at his herte 1884

T he moone / that at Noon was thilke day	
That Ianuarie / hath wedded fresshe May	
In two of Tawr / was in to Cancre glyden	
So longe hath Mayus / in hir chambre byden	1888
As custume is / vn-to thise nobles alle	
A bryde / shal nat eten in the halle	
Til dayes foure / or .iij. dayes atte leeste	
Ypassed been / thanne lat hire go to feeste	1892
The fourthe day compleet fro Noon to Noon	
Whan þat/ the heighe masse was ydoon	
In halle / sit this Ianuarie and May	
As fressh / as is the brighte someres day	1896
And so bifel / how that this goode man	
Remembred hym / vpon this Damyan	
And seyde / Seynte Marie / how may this be	
That Damyan / entendeth nat to me	1900
Is he ay syk / or how may this bityde	
Hise squieres / whiche that stooden ther bisyde	
Excused hym / by cause of his siknesse	
Which letted hym / to doon his bisynesse	1904
Noon oother cause / myghte make hym tarye	
¶ That me forthynketh / quod this Ianuarie	
He is a gentil squier / by my trouthe	
If that he deyde / it were harm and routh	1908
He is as wys / discret/ and as secree	
As any man / I woot of his degree	
And ther-to manly / and eek seruysable	
And for to been a thrifty man right able	1912
But after mete / as soone as euere I may	
I wol my self visite hym and eek May	
To doon hym / al the confort that I kan	
And for that word / hym blessed euery man	1916
That of his bountee / and his gentillesse	
He wolde so conforten in siknesse	
His squier / for it was a gentil dede	
Dame quod this Ianuarie / taak good hede	1920

At after Noon / ye with youre wommen alle
 Whan ye han been in chambre / out of this halle
 That alle ye / go se this Damyan
 Dooth hym disport/ he is a gentil man 1924
 And telleth hym / that I wol hym visite
 Haue I no thyng' but rested me a lite
 And spede yow faste / for I wole abyde [leaf 114]
 Til that ye slepe / faste by my syde 1928
 And with that word / he gan to hym to calle
 A Squier / that was Marchal of his halle
 And tolde hym *certeyn* thynges / what he wolde
 ¶ This fresshe May / hath streight hir wey yholde 1932
 With alle hir wommen / vn-to Damyan
 Doun by his beddes syde / sit she than
 Confortynge hym / as goodly as she may
 This Damyan / whan that his tyme he say 1936
 In secree wise / his purs and eek his bille
 In which *þat* he / ywriten hadde his wille
 Hath put in to hire hand / with-uten moore
 Saue *þat* he siketh / wonder depe and soore 1940
 And softly to hire / right thus seyde he
 Mercy / and that ye nat discouere me
 ffor I am deed / if that this thyng/ be kyd
 This purs hath she / inwith hir bosom hyd 1944
 And wente hire wey / ye gete namoore of me
 But vn-to Ianuarie / ycomen is she
 That on his beddes syde / sit ful softe
 He taketh hire / and kisseth hire ful ofte 1948
 And leyde hym doun to slepe / and that anon
 She feyned hire / as that she moste gon
 Ther as ye woot' *þat* euery wight moot neede
 And whan she of this bille / hath taken heede 1952
 She rente it/ al to cloutes atte laste
 And in the pryuee / softly it caste
 Who studieth now / but faire fresshe May
 Adoun / by olde Ianuarie she lay 1956

That sleepe / til þat the coughe / hath hym awaked
 Anon he preyde hire / strepen hire al naked
 He wolde of hire he seyde / han som plesaunce
 And seyde / hir clothes / dide hym encombraunce 1960
 And she obeyeth / be hire lief or looth
 But lest ye precious folk / be with me wrooth
 How that he wroghte / I dar nat to yow telle
 Or wheither / þat hire thoughte it Paradys or helle 1964
 But heere I lete hem / werken in hir wyse
 Til euensong rong and þat they moste aryse
 Were it by destynnee / or by auenture
 Were it by Influence / or by nature 1968
 Or constellacion / that in swich estaat
 The heuene / stood that tyme fortunaat
 Was for to putte a bille / of Venus werkes
 ffor alle thyng hath tyme / as seyn this clerkes 1972
 To any womman / for to gete hire loue
 I kan nat seye / but grete god aboue
 That knoweth / that noon Act is causelees [leaf 114, back]
 He deme of al / for I wole holde my pees 1976
 But sooth is this / how that this fresshe May
 Hath take / swich impression that day
 ffor pitee / of this sike Damyan
 That from hire herte / she ne dryue kan 1980
 The remembrance / for to doon hym ese
 Certeyn thoghte she / whom þat this thyng displese
 I rekke noght / for heere I hym assure
 To loue hym best of any creature 1984
 Though he namoore hadde than his sherte
 Lo pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 ¶ Heere may ye se / how excellent franchise
 In wommen is / whan they hem narwe auyse 1988
 Som tyrant is / as ther be many oon
 That hath an herte / as hard / as any stoon
 Which wolde / han lat hym storuen in the place
 Wel rather / than han graunted hym hire grace 1992

And hem reioysen / in hire crueel pryde
 And rekke nat' to been an homycide
 ¶ This gentil May / fulfilled of pitee
 Right of hire hand / a lettre made she 1996
 In which she graunteth hym hire *verray* grace
 Ther lakketh noght/ oonly / but day and place
 Wher þat she myghte / vn-to his lust suffice
 ffor it shal be / right as he wole deuyse 2000
 And whan she saugh hir tyme vp on a day
 To visite this Damyan / gooth May
 And sotilly this *lettre* / doun she threste
 Vnder his pilwe / rede it if hym leste 2004
 She taketh hym by the hand / and harde hym twiste
 So secrely / that no wight of it wiste
 And bad hym been al hool / and forth he wente
 To Ianuarie / whan þat he for hym sente 2008
 Vp riseth Damyan / the nexte morwe
 Al passed was / his siknesse and his sorwe
 He kembeth hym / he preyneth hym and pyketh
 He dooth / al that his lady lust and lyketh 2012
 And eek to Ianuarie / he gooth as lowe
 As euere dide / a dogge for the bowe
 He is so plesant/ vn-to euery man
 ffor craft is al / who so that do it kan 2016
 That euery wight/ is fayn to speke hym good
 And fully / in his lady grace he stood
 Thus lete I Damyan / aboute his nede
 And in my tale / forth I wol procede 2020
 ¶ Somme clerkes / holden that felicitee
 Stant in delit/ and therfore *certeyn* he^s
 This noble Ianuarie / with al his myght
 In honeste wyse / as longeth to a knyght [leaf 118] 2024
 Shoope hym to lyue / ful deliciously
 His housynge / his array / as honestly
 To his degree / was maked as a kynges
 Amonges othere / of hise honeste thynges 2028

He made a gardyn / walled al with stoon
 So fair a gardyn / woot I nowher noon
 ffor out of doute / I verrailly suppose
 That he / þat wroot the romance of the Rose 2032
 Ne koude of it/ the beautee wel deuyse
 Ne Priapus / ne mygh̃te nat suffise
 Though he be god of gardyns / for to telle
 The beautee of the gardyn / and the welle 2036
 That stood vnder a laurer / alwey grene
 fful ofte tyme / he Pluto and his queene
 Proserpina / and al hire fairye
 Disporten hem / and maken melodye 2040
 Aboute that welle / and daunced as men tolde
 ¶ This noble knygh̃t this Ianuarie the olde
 Swich deyntee hath / in it to walke and pleye
 That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye 2044
 Sauē he hym self/ for of the smale wyket
 He baar alwey / of siluer a Clyket
 With which / whan þat hym leste he it vnshette
 And whan he wolde / paye his wyf hir dette 2048
 In Somer seson / thider wolde he go
 And May his wyf/ and no wight but they two
 And thynges / whiche þat were nat doon a bedde
 He in the gardyn / parfourned hem and spedde 2052
 And in this wyse / many a murye day
 Lyued this Ianuarie / and fresshe May
 But worldly Ioye / may nat alwey dure
 To Ianuarie / ne to no creature 2056
 O sodeyn hape / o thou fortune Instable ¶ Auctor 𐝒
 Lyk to the Scorpion / so deceyuable
 That flaterest with thyn heed / whan thou wolt synge
 Thy tayl is deeth / thurgh̃ thyn enuenymynge 2060
 O brotil Ioye / o sweete venym queynte
 O Monstre / that so subtilly kanst peynte
 Thy yiftes / vnder hewe of stidefastnesse
 That thou deceyuest bothe moore and lesse 2064

Why hastow Ianuarie / thus deceyued
 That haddest hym / for thy ful freend receyued
 And now thou hast biraft hym bothe hise eyen
 ffor sorwe of which / desireth he to dyen 2068
 ¶ Allas / this noble Ianuarie free
 Amydde his lust and his prosperitee
 Is woxen blynd / and that al sodeynly [leaf 115, back]
 He wepeth and he wayleth pitously 2072
 And ther with al / the fyr of Ialousie
 Lest þat his wyf / sholde falle in swich folye
 So brente his herte / that he wolde fayn
 That som man / bothe hym *and* hire had slayn 2076
 ffor neither after his deeth / nor in his lyf
 Ne wolde he / þat she were loue ne wyf
 But euere lyue as wydwe in clothes blake
 Soul as the turtle / þat lost hath hire make 2080
 But atte laste / after a Monthe or tweye
 His sorwe gan aswage / sooth to seye
 ffor whan he wiste / it may noon oother be
 He paciently / took his Aduersitee 2084
 Saue out of doute / he may nat forgoon
 That he nas Ialous / euere moore in oon
 Which Ialousye / it was so outrageous
 That neither in halle / nyn noon oother hous 2088
 Nyn noon oother place / neuerthemo
 He nolde suffre hire / for to ryde or go
 But if þat he / had hond on hire alway
 ffor which ful ofte / wepeth fresshe May 2092
 That loueth Damyan / so benyngnely
 That she moot oother dyen sodeynly
 Or elles / she moot han hym as hir leste
 She wayteth / whan hir herte wolde breste 2096
 ¶ Vp on that oother syde Damyan
 Bicomen is / the sorwefulleste man
 That euere was / for neither nyght ne day
 Ne myghte he speke a word to fresshe May 2100

As to his purpos / of no swich mateere
 But if that Ianuarie / moste it heere
 That hadde an hand / vp on hire eueremo
 But nathelees / by writyng to and fro 2104
 And priuee signes / wiste he what she mente
 And she knew eek / the fyn of his entente
O Ianuarie / what myghite it thee auaille ¶ Auctor
 Thogh thou myghtest se / as fer as shippes saille
 ffor as good is / blynd deceyued be 2109
 As to be deceyued / whan a man may se
 ¶ Lo Argus / which þat hadde / an hondred eyen
 ffor al þat euere / he koude poure or pryen 2112
 Yet was he blent / and god woot so been mo
 That wenen wisly / that it be nat so
 Passe ouer is an ese / I sey namoore
 ¶ This fresshe May / þat I spak of so yoore 2116
 In warm wex / hath emprented the clyket
 That Ianuarie bar / of the smale wyket
 By which / in to his gardyn ofte he wente [leaf 116]
 And Damyan / that knew al hire entente 2120
 The cliket countrefeted pryuely
 Ther nys namoore to seye / but hastily
 Som wonder / by this clyket shal bityde
 Which ye shul heeren / if ye wole abyde 2124
 ¶ O noble Ouyde / ful sooth seystou god woot ¶ Auctor 𐀀
 What sleighte is it / thogh it be long and hoot
 That he nyl fynde it out / in som manere
 By Piramus / and Tesbee / may men leere 2128
 Thogh they were kept ful longe streite oueral
 They been accorded / rownyng thurgh a wal
 Ther no wight / koude han founde out swich a sleighte
 ¶ But now to purpos / er þat dayes eighite 2132
 Were passed / er the Monthe of Iuyl bifille
 That Ianuarie / hath caught so greet a wille
 Thurgh eggyng of his wyf hym for to pleye
 In his gardyn / and no wight but they tweye 2136

That in a morwe / vn-to this May seith he
 Rys vp my wyf/ my loue / my lady free
 The turtle voys is herd / my dowue sweete
 The wynter is goon / with his¹ reynes weete [¹ his interlined
in a later hand]
 Com forth now / with thyne eyen columbyn 2141
 How fairer been thy brestes / than is wyn
 The gardyn / is enclosed al aboute
 Com forth my white spouse / out of doute 2144
 Thou hast me wounded / in myn herte / o wyf
 No spot of thee / ne knew I al my lyf
 Come forth / and lat vs taken som disport
 I chees thee / for my wyf and my confort 2148
 ¶ Swiche olde lewed wordes vsed he
 On Damyan / a signe made she
 That he sholde go biforn / with his cliket
 This Damyan thanne / hath opened the wyket 2152
 And In he stirte / and that in swich manere
 That no wight myghte it se / neither yheere
 And stille he sit/ vnder a busshe anon
 ¶ This Ianuarie / as blynd as is a stoon 2156
 With Mayus in his hand / and no wight mo
 In to his fresshe gardyn is ago
 And clapte to / the wyket sodeynly
 ¶ Now wyf quod he / heere nys but thou and I 2160
 That art the creature / that I best loue
 ffor by that lord / þat sit in heuene aboue
 Leuere ich hadde / to dyen on a knyf
 Than thee offende / trewe deere wyf 2164
 ffor goddes sake / thank how I thee chees
 Noght for no coueitise doutelees
 But oonly / for the loue / I had to thee [leaf 116, back]
 And though þat I be cold / and may nat see 2168
 Beth to me trewe / and I shal telle yow why^e
 Thre thynges / certes / shal ye wynne ther by
 ffirst loue of Crist/ and to youre self honour
 And al myn heritage / toun and tour 2172

I yeue it yow / maketh chartres as yow leste
 This shal be doon tomorwe er sonne reste
 So wisly / god my soule brynge in blisse
 I prey yow first/ in couenat ye me kisse 2176
 And though þat I be Ialous wyte me noght
 Ye been so depe / enprented in my thoght
 That whan I considere youre beautee
 And ther with al / the vnlikly elde of me 2180
 I may nat certes / though I sholde dye
 fforbere / to been out of youre compaignye
 ffor verray loue / this is with outen doute
 Now kys me wyf/ and lat vs rome aboute 2184
 ¶ This fresshe May / whan she thise wordes herde
 Benyngnely / to Ianuarie answerde
 But first and forward / she bigan to wepe
 I haue quod she / a soule for to kepe 2188
 As wel as ye / and also myn honour
 And of my wyfhod / thilke tendre flour
 Which þat I haue / assured in youre hond
 Whan þat the preest to yow my body bond 2192
 Wherefore / I wole answer / in this manere
 By the leue of yow / my lord so deere
 I prey to god / þat neuere dawe the day
 That I ne sterue / as foule as womman may 2196
 If euere I do / vn to my kyn that shame
 Or elles / I empeyre so my name
 That I be fals / and if I do that lakke
 Do strepe me / and put me in a sakke 2200
 And in the nexte ryuer / do me drenche
 I am a gentil womman and no wenche
 Why speke ye thus /^s but men been euere vntrewe
 And wommen / haue repreue of yow ay newe 2204
 Ye han noon oother contenance I leue
 But speke to vs / of vntrust and repreue
 ¶ And with that word / she saugh wher Damiyan
 Sat in the bussh / and coughen she bigan 2208

And with hir fynger / signes made she
 That Damyan / sholde clymbe vp on a tree
 That charged was with fruyt and vp he wente
 for verrailly / he knew al hire entente 2212
 And euery signe / þat she koude make
 Wel bet than Ianuarie / hir owene make
 for in a lettre / she hadde toold hym al [leaf 117]
 Of this matere / how he werchen shal 2216
 And thus I lete hym sitte / vp on the pyrie
 And Ianuarie and May romynge myrie
Bright was the day / and blew the firmament
 Phebus hath of gold / hise stremes doun ysent 2220
 To gladen euery flour with his warmnesse
 He was that tyme / in Geminis as I gesse
 But litel / fro his declynacion
 Of Cancer / Iouis exaltacion 2224
 And so bifel / that brighte morwe tyde
 That in that gardyn / in the ferther syde
 Pluto / that is kyng of ffairye
 And many a lady / in his compaignye 2228
 ffolwyng his wyf / the queene Proserpyne
 Ech after oother / right as a lyne
 Whil þat she gadered / floures in the mede
 In Claudyan / ye may the stories rede 2232
 And in his grisely Carte / he hire sette
 This kyng of ffairye / thanne adoun hym sette
 Vp on a bench of turues / fressh and grene
 And right anon / thus seyde he to his queene 2236
 ¶ My wyf quod he / ther may no wight seye nay
 Thexperience / so preueth euery day
 The tresons / whiche þat women doon to man
 Ten hondred thousand / tellen I kan 2240
 Notable / of youre vntrouthe and brotilnesse
 O Salomon / wys / and richest of richesse
 ffulfild of sapience / and of worldly glorie
 fful worthy been thy wordes to memorie 2244

To euery wight þat wit and reson kan
 Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man
 ¶ Amonges a thousand men / yet foond I oon
 But of wommen alle / foond I noon 2248
 ¶ Thus seith the kyng þat knoweth youre wikkednesse
 And Ihesus filius Syrak as I gesse
 Ne speketh of yow / but seelde reuerence
 A wyld fyr / and corrupt pestilence 2252
 So falle vp on youre bodyes yet to nyght
 Ne se ye nat this honorable knyght
 By cause allas / that he is blynd and old
 His owene man / shal make hym Cokewold 2256
 Lo heere he sit the lechour in the tree
 Now wol I graunten / of my magestee
 Vn-to this olde blynde worthy knyght
 That he shal haue ayeyn hise eyen syght 2260
 Whan þat his wyf / wold doon hym vileynye
 Thanne shal he knowen / al hire harlotrye
 Bothe in repreue of hire / and othere mo [leaf 117, back]
 ¶ Ye shal quod Proserpyne / wol ye so ? 2264
 Now by my moodres sires soule I swere
 That I shal yeuen hire suffisant answer
 And alle wommen after / for hir sake
 That though they be / in any gilt ytake 2268
 With face boold / they shulle hem self excuse
 And bere hem down / that wolden hem accuse
 ffor lakke of answer / noon of hem shal dyen
 Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe hise eyen 2272
 Yit shul we wommen / visage it hardily
 And wepe / and swere / and visage it subtilly
 So þat ye men / shul been / as lewed as gees
 What rekketh me / of youre Auctoritees 2276
 ¶ I woot wel / that this Iew / this Salomon
 ffoond of vs wommen / fooles many oon
 But though þat he ne foond / no good womman
 Yet hath ther founde / many another man 2280

Wommen ful trewe / ful goode / and vertuous
 Witnesse on hem / þat dwelle in Cristes hous
 With martirdom / they preued hire constance
 The Romain geestes / eek' maken remembrance 2284
 Of many a verray / trewe wyf also
 But sire ne be nat wrooth / al be it so
 Though þat he seyde / he foond no good womman
 I prey yow / take the sentence of the man 2288
 He mente thus / that in souereyn bontee
 Nis noor / but god þat sit in Trinitee
 ¶ Ey for verray god / that nys but oon
 What make ye / so mucche of Salomon 2292
 What though he made a temple goddes hous
 What' though he were / riche and glorious
 So made he eek / a temple of false goddis
 How myghte he do a thyng' þat moore forbode is 2296
 Pardee / as faire / as ye his name emplastre
 He was a lecchour / and an ydolastre
 And in his elde / he verray god forsook'
 And if god ne hadde / as seith the book' 2300
 Yspared for his fadres sake / he sholde
 Haue lost his regne / rather than he wolde
 I sette right noght' of al the vileynye
 That ye of wommen write / a Boterflye 2304
 I am a womman / nedes moot I speke
 Or elles swelle / til myn herte breke
 ffor sithen he seyde / that we been Iangleress-
 As euere hool / I moote brouke my tresses 2308
 I shal nat spare / for no curteisye
 To speke hym harm / þat wolde vs vileynye
Dame quod this Pluto / be no lenger wrooth' [leaf 118]
 I yeue it vp / but sith I swoor myn ooth 2312
 That I wolde / graunten hym his sighte ageyn
 My word shal stonde / I warne yow certeyn
 I am a kynge it sit me noght to lye
 ¶ And I quod she / a Queene of ffairye 2316

Hir answer shal she haue I vndertake
 Lat vs namoore wordes heer-of make
 ffor sothe / I wol no lenger/ yow contrarie
 ¶ Now lat vs / turne agayn to Ianuarie 2320
 That in the gardyn / with his faire May
 Syngeth ful murier / than the Papeiay
 Yow loue I best and shal and oother noon
 So longe / aboute the Aleyes is he goon 2324
 Til he was come / agayns thilke pyrie
 Where as this Damyan / sitteth ful myrie
 Anheigh / among the fresshe leues grene
 ¶ This fresshe May / that is so bright and sheene 2328
 Gan for to syke / and seyde / allas my syde
 Now sire quod she / for aught þat may bityde
 I moste han / of the peres that I see
 Or I moot dye / so soore longeth me 2332
 To eten / of the smale peres grene
 Help for hir loue / þat is of heuene queene.
 I telle yow wel / a womman in my plit
 May han to fruyt so greet an Appetit 2336
 That she may dyen / but she of it haue
 ¶ Allas quod he / þat I ne had heer a knaue
 That koude clymbe / allas allas quod he
 That I am blynd / ye sire no fors quod she 2340
 ¶ But wolde ye vouche sauþ for goddes sake
 The pyrie / inwith youre armes for to take
 ffor wel I woot/ that ye mystruste me
 Thanne sholde I clymbe / wel ynogh quod she 2344
 So I my foot myghte sette vpon youre bak/
 ¶ Certes quod he / ther-on shal be no lak
 Mighte I yow helpen / with myn herte blood
 He stoupeth down / and on his bak she stood 2348
 And caughte hire by a twiste / and vp she gooth
 Ladyes / I prey yow / þat ye be nat wrooth
 I kan nat glose / I am a rude man
 And sodeynly / anon this Damyan 2352

Gan pullen vp the smok / and In he throng'
 ¶ And whan þat Pluto / saugh this grete wrong'
 To Ianuarie / he gaf agayn his sighte
 And made hym se / as wel as euere he myghte 2356
 And whan þat he / hadde caught his sighte agayn
 Ne was ther neuere / man of thyng' so fayn
 But on his wyf / his thoght was eueremo (leaf 118, back)
 Vp to the tree / he caste hise eyen two 2360
 And saugh þat Damyan / his wyf had dressed
 In swich manere / it may nat been expressed
 But if I wolde / speke vncurteisly
 And vp he yaf / a roryng' and a cry 2364
 As dooth the mooder / whan the child shal dye
 Out helpe / allas / harrow he gan to crye
 O stronge lady stoore / what dostow?
 ¶ And she answerde / sire what eyleth yow? 2368
 Haue pacience / and resoñ in youre mynde
 I haue yow holpe / on bothe youre eyen blynde
 Vp peril of my soule / I shal nat lyen
 As me was taught / to heele with youre eyen 2372
 Was no thyng bet to make yow to see
 Than strugle with a man / vp on a tree
 God woot I dide it / in ful good entente
 ¶ Strugle quod he ? ye algate In it wente 2376
 God yeue yow bothe / on shames deth to dyen
 He swyued thee / I saugh it. with myne eyen
 And elles / be I hanged by the hals
 ¶ Thanne is quod she / my medicyne fals 2380
 ffor certainly / if that ye myghte se
 Ye wolde nat seyn / thise wordes vn to me
 Ye han som glymsyng' and no parfit sighte
 ¶ I se quod he / as wel as euere I myghte 2384
 Thonked be god / with bothe myne eyen two
 And by my trouthe / me thoughte he dide thee so
 ¶ Ye maze / maze / goode sire quod she
 This thank haue I / for I haue maad yow see 2388

Allas quod she / that euere I was so kynde
 ¶ Now dame quod he / lat al passe out of mynde
 Com doun my lief and if I haue myssayd
 God helpe me so / as I am yuele apayd 2392
 But by my fader soule / I wende han seyn
 How that this Damyan / hadde by thee leyn
 And þat thy smok hadde leyn vp on his brest
 ¶ Ye sire quod she / ye may wene as yow lest 2396
 But sire / a man / þat waketh out of his sleepe
 He may nat sodeynly / wel taken keepe
 Vp on a thyng ne seen it parfitly
 Til þat he be / adawed verrailly 2400
 ¶ Right so a man / þat longe hath blynd ybe
 Ne may nat sodeynly / so wel yse
 first whan his sighte / is newe come ageyn
 As he þat hath / a day or two yseyn 2404
 Til that youre sighte / ysatled be a while
 Ther may / ful many a sighte yow bigile
 Beth war I prey yow / for by heuene kyng
 fful many a man / weneth to seen a thyng 2408
 And it is / al another / than it semeth
 He þat mysconceyueth / he myedemeth
 And with that word / she leepe doun fro the tree
 ¶ This Ianuarie / who is glad but he 2412
 He kisseth hire / and clippeth hire ful ofte
 And on hire wombe / he stroketh hire ful softe
 And to his palays / hoom he hath hire lad
 Now goode men / I pray yow be glad 2416
 Thus endeth heere / my tale of Ianuarie
 God blesse vs / and his mooder Seinte Marie 2418
 ¶ Heere is ended / the Marchantes tale of Ianuarie 𐀚

¶ The Prologe of the Squieres tale 𐀚

[on leaf 119]

Ey goddes mercy / seyde oure Hoost tho
 Now swich a wyf/ I pray god kepe me fro 2420
 Lo whiche sleightes / and subtiltees
 In wommen been / for ay as bisy as bees
 Been they / vs sely men for to deceyue
 And from a sooth / euere wol they weyue 2424
 By this Marchauntes tale / it preueth weel
 But doutelees / as trewe as any steel
 I haue a wyf/ though þat she poure be
 But of hir tonge / a labbyng shrewe is she 2428
 And yet she hath / an heepe of vices mo
 Ther-of no fors / lat alle swiche thynges go
 But wyte ye what in conseil be it seyð
 Me reweth soore / I am vn-to hire teyð 2432
 ffor and I sholde / rekenen euery vice
 Which þat she hath / ywis I were to nyce
 And cause why / it sholde reported be
 And toold to hire / of somme of this meynne 2436
 Of whom / it nedeth nat for to declare
 Syn wommen / konnen outen swich chaffare
 And eek my wit suffiseth nat ther to
 To tellen al / wherfore my tale is do 2440

[No break in the MS.]

SIDE-NOTES TO THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 445, l. 1311. ¶ Vxor est diligenda quia donum dei est || Ihesus filius sirac/ domus & diuicie dantur a parentibus / a domino autem proprie vxor bona vel prudens. [MS, leaf 107, back.]

p. 445, l. 1327. ¶ fficiamus ei adiutorium & extracta costa de corpore Ade fecit Euam & dixit / propter hec/ relinquet homo patrem & matrem & adherabit &cetera et erunt duo in carne vna. [MS, leaf 107, back.]

p. 446, l. 1362. Iacob || per consilium matris sue Rebecce &cetera. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1366. Iudith / de manibus Oloferni & cetera. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1369. Abigayl / per suum bonum consilium virum suum Nabal ab ira dauid liberauit. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1371. Ester & cetera Iudeos per bonum consilium simul cum Mardocheo in regno Assueri. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1375. ¶ Seneca / sicut nichil est benigna coniuge/ ita nichil crudelius est infesta muliere. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1377. ¶ Cato / vxoris linguam si frugi est/ ferre memento. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1380. ¶ Bona mulier fidelis custos est/ & bona domus. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 447, l. 1383. ¶ Apostolus Paulus ad Ephesianos / diligite vxores vestras sicut christus dilexit ecclesiam & cetera. [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 447, l. 1385. ¶ Apostolus. Ita viri debent diligere vxores suas vt corpora sua / quia qui suam vxorem diligit/ seipsum diligit/ nemo vnquam carnem suam odio habuit/ set nutrit & fouet eam /. et postea / vnusquisque suam vxorem sicut ipsum diligit. [MS, leaf 108.]

GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

§ 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Squier come neer / if it youre wille be	[on leaf 119]
And sey somewhat of loue / for certes ye ^s	
Konnen ther on / as muche as any man	
¶ Nay sire quod he / but I wol seye as I kan	4
With hertly wyl / for I wol nat rebelle	
Agayn youre lust ^s a tale wol I telle	
Haue me excused / if I speke amys	[leaf 119, back]
My wyl is good / and lo my tale is this	8

[Painting of the Squire on Horseback.]

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Squieres tale 
[on leaf 119, back]

AT Sarray / in the land of Tartarye
 Ther dwelte a kyng that werreyed Russye
 Thurgh which ther dyde / many a doughty man
 This noble kyng was cleped Cambynaskan¹
 Which in his tyme / was of so greet renoun ^{[¹ MS more like Cam-}
 That ther was / no wher in no Region ^{bynaskan all through]}
 So excellent a lord / in alle thyng
 Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng 16
 And of the secte / of which pat he was born
 He kepte his lay / to which pat he was sworn
 And ther to / he was hardy / wys and riche
 And pitous and Iust alwey yliche 20
 Sooth of his word / benigne and honorable
 Of his corage / as any Centre stable ¶ Centrum circuli
 Yong fressh / strong and in Armes desirous
 As any Bachelor / of al his hous 24
 A fair persone he was / and fortunat
 And kepte alwey / so wel roial estat
 That ther was nowher / swich another man
 ¶ This noble kyng this Tartre Cambynaskan 28
 Hadde two sones / on Elpheta his wyf
 Of whiche / the eldeste highte Algarsyf
 That oother sone / was cleped Cambalo
 A doghter hadde / this worthy kyng also 32
 That yongest was / and highte Canacee
 But for to telle yow / al hir beautee
 It lyth nat in my tonge / nyn my konnyng
 I dar nat vndertake / so heigh a thyng 36

Myn englissh eek^t is insufficient^t
 I moste been / a Rethor excellent^t
 That koude hise colours / longynge for that Art^t
 If he / sholde hire discryuen euery part^t 40
 I am noon swich / I moot speke as I kan
 ¶ And so bifel / that whan this Cambynskan
 Hath twenty wynter / born his diademe
 As he was wont fro yeer to yeer I deme 44
 He leet the feeste / of his Natiuitee
 Doon cryen / thurgh Sarray his Citee
 The last Idus of March / after the yeer
 Phebus the sonne / ful ioly was and cleer 48
 ffor he was / neigh his exaltacioñ
 In Martes face / and in his mansion
 In Aries / the colerik/ hote signe [leaf 120]
 fful lusty was / the weder and benigne 52
 ffor which the foweles / agayn the sonne sheene
 What for the sesoñ / and the yonge grene
 fful loude / songen hire affeccioñs
 Hem semed / han geten hem proteccioñs 56
 Agayn the swerd of wynter/ keene and coold^t
 ¶ This Cambynskan / of which I haue yow took^t
 In roial vestiment sit on his days
 With diademe / ful heighe in his paleys 60
 And halt his feeste so solempne / and so ryche
 That in this world / was ther noon it lyche
 Of which / if I sbal tellen al tharray
 Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day 64
 And eek/ it nedeth nat for to deuysen^{so}
 At euery cours / the ordre of hire seruyse
 I wol nat tellen / of hir strange sewes
 Ne of hir swannes / nor of hire heronsewes 68
 Eek/ in that lond / as tellen knyghtes olde
 Ther is som mete / þat is ful deynte holde
 That in this lond / men recche of it but smal
 Ther nys no man / that may reporten al 72

¶ I wol nat taryen yow / for it is pryme And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme Vn to my firste / I wole haue my recours	
¶ And so bifel / that after the thridde cours Whil þat this kyng sit thus in his nobleye Herknynghe hise Mynstrals / hir thynges pleye Biforn hym at the bord / deliciously In at the halle dore / al sodeynly	76 80
Ther cam a knyght vp on a steede of bras And in his hand / a brood Mirour of glas Vpon his thombe / he hadde of gold a ryng / And by his syde / a naked swerd hangyng And vp he rideth / to the heighe bord In al the halle / ne was ther spoken a word ffor merueille of this knyght hym to biholde fful bisily / ther wayten yonge and olde	84 88
¶ This strange knyght that cam thus sodeynly Al armed / saue his heed / ful richely Saleweth kyng and queene / and lordes alle By ordre / as they seten in the halle With so heigh reuerence / and obeisaunce As wel in speche / as in contenaunce That Gawayn / with his olde curteisye Though he were / comen ayeyn out of ffairye Ne koude hym nat amende with a word And after this / biforn the heighe bord He with a manly voys / seith his message	92 96
After the forme / vsed in his langage With outen vice / of silable / or of lettre And for his tale / sholde seme the bettre Accordant to hise wordes / was his cheere As techeth art of speche / hem þat it leere Al be / that I kan nat sowne his stile Ne kan nat clymben / ouer so heigh a style Yet seye I this / as to commune entente Thus muche amounteth / al þat euere he mente	[leaf 120, back] 100 104 108

If it so be / þat I haue it in mynde
 ¶ He seyde / the kyng of Arabe and of Inde
 My lige lord / on this solempne day
 Saleweth yow / as he best kan and may 112
 And sendeth yow / in honour of youre feeste
 By me / that am al redy at youre heeste
 This steede of bras / that esily and weel ¶ Of the vertu/ of the
 Kan in the space / of o day natureel steede of bras 116
 This is to seyn / in foure and twenty houres
 Wher so yow lyst in droghte or elles shoures
 Beren youre body / in to euery place
 To which youre herte / wilneth for to pace 120
 With outen wem of yow / thurgh foul or fair
 Or if yow lyst to fleen / as hye in the Air
 As dooth an Egle / whan þat hym list to soore
 This same steede / shal bere yow euere moore 124
 With outen harm / til ye be ther yow leste
 Though that ye slepen / on his bak or reste
 And turne ayeyn / with withyngt of a pyn
 He þat it wroghte / koude ful many a gyn 128
 He wayted / many a constellacion
 Er he / had doon / this operacion
 And knew ful many a seel / and many a bond
 ¶ This mirrour eek / þat I haue in myn hono^r ¶ Of the vertu
 Hath swich a myght / þat men may in it see of the Mirour
 Whan ther shal fallen / any Aduersitee
 Vn to youre regne / or to youre self also
 And openly / who is youre freend or foo 136
 ¶ And ouer al this / if any lady bright
 Hath set hire herte / in any maner wight
 If he be fals / she shal his treson see
 His newe loue / and al his subtiltee 140
 So openly / þat ther shal no thyng hyde
 Wherfore / ageyn this lusty someres tyde
 This Mirour / and this ryngt þat ye may see
 He hath sent vn to my lady Canacee 144

Your^{his}e excellent^{andir}e doghter/ that is heere
 ¶ The vertu of the ryng^{andir} if ye wol heere ¶ Of the vertu
 Is this / that if hire lust it for to were of the ryng/
 Vp on hir thombe / or in hir purs it bere [leaf 121] 148
 Ther is no fowel / þat fleeth vnder the heuene
 That she / ne shal / wel vnderstonde his steuene
 And knowe his menyng^{andir} openly and pleyne
 And answe^{andir}re hym / in his langage ageyn 152
 And euery gras / that groweth vp on roote
 She shal eek knowe / and whom it wol do boote
 Al be hise woundes / neuer so depe and wyde
 ¶ This naked swerd^{andir} / þat hangeth by my syde ¶ Of the vertu
 Swich vertu hath / þat what man so ye smyte of the swerde
 Thurgh out his Armure / it wole hym kerue and byte
 Were it as thikke / as is a branched ook^{andir}
 And what man / that is wounded with a strook^{andir} 160
 Shal neuer be hool / til þat yow list of grace
 To stroke hym with the plat in that place
 Ther hē is hurt / this is as muche to seyn
 Ye moote / with the plat swerd ageyn 164
 Strike hym in the wounde / and it wol close
 This is a verray sooth / with outen glose
 It failleth nat whils it is in youre hoold^{andir}
 ¶ And whan this knyght^{andir} hath thus his tale toold^{andir} 168
 He rideth out of halle / and down he lighte
 His steede / which þat shoon / as sonne brighte
 Stant in the court stille as any stoon
 This knyght^{andir} is to his chambre lad anoon 172
 And is vnarmed / and vn to mete yset^{andir}
 ¶ The presentes / been / ful roially yfet^{andir}
 This is to seyn / the swerd and the Mirour
 And born anon / in to the heighe Tour 176
 With certeine officers / ordeyned therfore
 And vn to Canacee / this ryng^{andir} was bore
 Solempnely / ther she sit / at the table
 But sikerly / with outen any fable 180

The hors of bras / þat may nat be remewed
 It stant' as it were / to the ground yglewed
 Ther may no man / out of the place it dryue
 ffor noon engyn / of wyndas ne polyue 184
 And cause why^s/ for they kan nat the craft
 And therefore / in the place / they han it laft
 Til þat the knyght hath taught hem the manere
 To voyden hym / as ye shal after heere 188
Greet was the prees / þat swarmeth to and fro
 To gauren on this hors / that stondeth so
 ffor it so heigh was / and so brood and long
 So wel proporcioned / for to been strong 192
 Right' as it were / a steede of Lumbardye
 Ther-with so horsly / and so quyk of eye
 As it a gentil Poilleys Courser were [leaf 121, back]
 ffor certes / fro his tayl / vn to his ere 196
 Nature ne Art' ne koude hym nat amende
 In no degree / as al the peple wende
 But eueremoore / hir mooste wonder was
 How þat it koude go / and was of bras 200
 It was a ffairye / as al the peple semed
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they demed
 As many heddes / as manye wittes ther been
 They murmureden / as dooth a swarm of Been 204
 And maden skiles / after hir fantasies
 Rehersynge / of thise olde poetries
 And seyde / that it was lyk the Pegasee ¶ J. equus Pegasus
 The hors / þat hadde wynges for to flee 208
 Or elles / it was the Grekes hors Synon
 That broghte Troie to destruccion
 As men / in thise olde geestes rede
 ¶ Myn herte quod oon / is eueremoore in drede 212
 I trowe / som men of Armes been ther Inne
 That shapen hem / this Citee for to wynne
 It were right good / þat al swich thyng were knowe
 ¶ Another rowned / to his felawe lowe 216

And seyde he lyeth / it is rather lyk'
 An apparence / ymaad by som Magyk'
 As Iogelours pleyen / at thise feestes grete
 Of sondry doutes / thus they Iangle *and* trete 220
 As lewed peple / demeth comunly
 Of thynges / þat been maad / moore subtilly
 Than they kan / in hir lewednesse *compre*hende
 They demen gladly / to the badder ende 224
 ¶ And *sonme* of hem / wondred on the Mirour
 That born was vp / in to the hye tour
 Hou men myghte in it / swiche thynges se
 ¶ Another answerde / and seyde it myghte wel be 228
 Naturelly / by *composicio*ns
 Of Anglis / and of slye *reflexio*ns
 And seyden / þat in Rome was swich con
 They spoken / of Alocen and Vitulon 233
 And Aristotle / that writen in hir lyues
 Of queynte Mirours / and of *prospectiue*s
 As knowen they / that han hir bookes herþ
 ¶ And oother folk han wondred on the swerd 236
 That wolde percen / thurgh out euery thyng
 And fille in speche / of Thelophus the kyng
 And of Achilles / with his queynte spere
 ffor he koude with it bothe heele and dere 240
 Right in swich wise / as men may *with* the swerd
 Of which right now / ye han youre seluen herþ
 They spoken / of sondry hardyng of metal [leaf 122]
 And speke of medicynes / ther with al 244
 And how and whanne / it sholde yharded be
 Which is vnknowe / algates vnto me
 ¶ Tho speeke they / of Canacees ryng
 And seyden alle / þat swich a wonder thyng 248
 Of craft of rynges / herde they neuere noon
 Saue þat he Moyses / and kyng Salomon
 Hadde a name of konnyng in swich Art
 Thus seyn the peple / and drawen hem apart 252

¶ But natheles / somme seiden þat it was
 Wonder / to maken / of fern Asshen glas
 And yet nys glas / nat lyk Asshen of fern
 But for they han / knowen it so fern 256
 Therefore / cesseth / hir Ianglyng and hir wonder
 ¶ As soore wondren somme / on cause of thonder
 On ebbe / on flood / on gossomer / and on myst
 And on alle thyng til þat the cause is wyst 260
 Thus Iangle they / and demen and deuyse
 Til þat the kyng gan fro the bord aryse
Phebus / hath laft the Angle meridional
 And yet ascendynge / was the beest roial 264
 The gentil leon / with his Aldrian [aldrian later]
 Whan þat this Tartre kyng Cambynskan
 Roos fro his bord / ther that he sat ful hye
 To for hym gooth / the loude Mynstraleye 268
 Til he cam / to his chambre of parementz
 Ther as they sownen / diuerse Instrumentz
 That it is / lyk an heuene for to heere
 Now dauncen / lusty Venus children deere 272
 ffor in the fyssh / hir lady sat ful hye
 And looketh on hem / with a freendly eye
 ¶ This noble kyng is set vp in his Trone
 This strange knyght is fet to hym ful soone 276
 And on the daunce / he gooth with Canacee
 Heere is the reuel / and the Iolitee
 That is nat able / a dul man to deuyse
 He moste han knowen / loue and his seruyse 280
 And been a feestlych man / as fressh as May
 That sholde yow / deuysen swich array
 ¶ Who koude telle yow / the forme of daunces
 So vnkouth / and so fresshe contenaunces 284
 Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges
 ffor drede / of Ialouse mennes aperceyuynges
 No man but launcelet and he is deed
 Therefore I passe / of al this lustiheed 288

I sey namoore / but in this Iolynesse
 I lete hem / til men to the soper dresse
 ¶ The Styward bit Spices for to hye [leaf 122, back]
 And eek the wyn / in al this melodye 292
 The vschers / and the squiers been ygoon
 The spices and the wyn is come anoon
 They ete and drynke / and whan this hadde an ende
 Vn to the temple / as reson was they wende 296
 ¶ The seruice doon / they soupen al by day
 What nedeth me / rehercen hire array
 Ech man woot wel / þat a kynges feeste
 Hath plentee / to the mooste and to the leeste 300
 And deyntees / mo / than been in my knowyng
 At after soper / gooth this noble kyng
 To seen this hors of bras / with al the route
 Of lordes / and of ladyes hym aboute 304
 ¶ Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras
 That syn the grete sege / of Troie was
 Ther as men wondreden / on an hors also
 Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho 308
 But fynally / the kyng axeth this knyght
 The vertu of this Courser / and the myght
 And preyde hym / to telle his gouernaunce
 ¶ This hors anoon / bigan to trippe and daunce 312
 Whan that this knyght leyde hand vp on his reyne
 And seyde sire / ther is namoore to seyne
 But whan yow list to ryden any where
 Ye mooten trille a pyn / stant in his ere 316
 Which I shal yow telle / bitwix vs two
 Ye moote nempne hym / to what place also
 Or to what contree / þat yow list to ryde
 And whan ye come / ther as yow list abyde 320
 Bidde hym descende / and trille another pyn
 ffor ther lith / theffect of al the gyn
 And he wol down descende / and down youre wille
 And in that place / he wol stonde stille 324

Though al the world / the contrarie hadde yswore
 He shal nat thennes / been ydrawe nor ybore
 Or if yow list bidde hym thennes goon
 Trille this pyn / and he wol vanysshē anoon 328
 Out of the sighte / of euery maner wight
 And come agayn / be it day or nyght
 Whan þat yow list to clepen hym ageyn
 In swich a gyse / as I shal to yow seyn 332
 Bitwixe yow and me / and that ful soone
 Ride whan yow list ther is namoore to doone
 ¶ Enformed / whan the kyng was / of that knyght
 And hath conceyued / in his wit aright 336
 The manere / and the forme / of al this thyng
 Thus glad and blithe / this noble kyng
 Repeireth to his reuel / as biforn (leaf 123)
 ¶ The brydel / is / vn to the tour yborn 340
 And kept among hise lueles / leue and deere
 The hors vanysshed I noot / in what manere
 Out of hir sighte / ye gete namoore of me
 But thus I lete / in lust and Iolitee 344
 This Cambynskan / hise lordes festeiyng
 Til wel ny / the day bigan to spryng
 ¶ Explicit prima pars 𐀚

¶ Sequitur pars secunda 𐀚

The Norice of digestioun / the sleepe
 Gan on hem wynke / and bad hem taken keepe
 That muchel drynke / and labour wolde han reste
 And with a galpyng mouth / hem alle he keste
 And seyde / it was tyme to lye adoun
 ffor blood / was in his domynacioun 352
 Cherisseth blood / natures freend quod he
 They thanken hym galpyng / by two / by thre
 And euery wight / gan drawe hym to his reste
 As sleepe hem bad / they tooke it for the beste 356

¶ Hire dremes / shul nat been ytoold for me
ful were hire heddes / of fumositee
That causeth dreem / of which ther nys no charge
They slepen / til that it was pryme large 360
The mooste part but it were Canacee
She was ful mesurable / as wommen be
ffor of hir fader / hadde she take leue
To goon to reste / soone after it was eue 364
Hir liste nat appalled for to be
Ne on the morwe / vnfeestlich for to se
And slepte hire firste sleepe / and thanne awook/
ffor swich a ioye / she in hir herte took 368
Bothe of hir queynte ryng^r and hire Mirour
That twenty tyme / she changed hir colour
And in hire sleepe / right for impressiõ
Of hire Mirour/ she hadde Avisiõ 372
Wherfore / er þat the sonne gan vp glyde
She cleped / on hir Maistresse / hire bisyde
And seyde / that hire liste for to ryse
¶ Thise olde wommen / þat been gladly wyse 376
As hire Maistresse / answerde hire anon
And seyde madame / whider wil ye goon
Thus erly / for the folk/ been alle on reste
¶ I wol quod she arise / for me leste 380
No lenger for to slepe / and walke aboute [leaf 123, back]
¶ Hire Maistresse / clepeth wommen / a greet route
And vp they rysen / wel an ten / or twelue
Vp riseth / fresshe Canacee / hir selue 384
As rody and bright / as dooth the yonge sonne
That in the Ram / is foure degrees vp ronne
Noon hyer was he / whan she redy was
And forth she walketh / esily a pas 388
Arrayed / after the lusty seson soote
Lightly for to pleye / and walke on foote
Nat but with fyue or sixe / of hir meynce
And in a trench / forth in the park^r gooth she 392

- ¶ The vapour / which þat fro the erthe glood
 Made the sonne / to seme rody and brood
 But natheles / it was so fair a sighte
 That it made / alle hire hertes for to lighte 396
 What for the seson / and the morwenynge
 And for the foweles / that she herde synge
 ffor right anon / she wiste what they mente
 Right by hir song and knew al hire entente 400
 ¶ The knotte / why þat euery tale is toold
 If it be taried / til that lust be coold
 Of hem þat han / it after herkned yoore
 The sauour passeth / euer lenger the moore 404
 ffor fulsomnesse / of his prolixitee
 And by the same resoñ / thynketh me
 I sholde / to the knotte / condescende
 And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende 408
 A mydde a tree / fordryed / as whit as chalk
 As Canacee / was pleyng in hir walk
 Ther sat a ffaucon / ouer hire heed ful hye
 That with a pitous voys / so gan to crye 412
 That all the wode / resounded of hire cry
 Ybeten hath she hir self / so pitously
 With bothe hir wynges / til the rede blood
 Ran endelong the tree / ther she stood 416
 And euere in oon / she cryde alwey and shrighite
 And with hir beek / hir seluen so she prighite
 That ther nys Tygre / ne noon so crueel beest
 That dwelleth / outhere in wode or in fforest 420
 That nolde han wept if þat she wepe koude
 ffor sorwe of hire / she shrighite alwey so loude
 ffor ther nas neuere man / yet on lyue
 If þat I koude / a ffaucon wel discryue 424
 That herde of swich another of fairnesse
 As wel of plumage / as of gentillesse
 Of shape / and al that myghte yrekened be
 A ffaucon peregryn / thanne semed she 428

Of fremde Land / and eueremoore as she stood [leaf 124]
 She swowneth now and now / for lakke of blood
 Til wel neigh / is she fallen fro the tree
 ¶ This faire kynges doghter Canacee 432
 That on hir fynger / baar the queynte ryng
 Thurgh which / she vnderstood wel euery thyng
 That any fowel / may in his leden seyn
 And koude answeren hym / in his ledene ageyn 436
 Hath vnderstonde / what this ffaucon seyde
 And wel neigh / for the routhe / almoost she deyde
 And to the tree / she gooth ful hastily
 And on this ffaucon / looketh pitously 440
 And heeld hir lappe abrood / for wel she wiste
 The ffaucon / moste fallen fro the twiste
 Whan þat it swowned next for lakke of blood
 A longe while / to wayten hire she stood 444
 Til atte laste / she spak in this manere
 Vn to the hauk as ye shal after heere
 ¶ What is the cause / if it be for to telle
 That ye be / in this furial pyne of helle 448
 Quod Canacee / vn to the hauk / aboue
 Is this for sorwe of deeth / or los of loue
 ffor as I trowe / thise been causes two
 That causeth moost a gentil herte wo 452
 Of oother harm / it nedeth nat to speke
 ffor ye youre self / vpon your self yow wreke
 Which proueth wel / that oother loue or drede
 Moot been encheson / of youre cruel dede 456
 Syn þat I see / noon oother wight yow chace
 ffor loue of god / as dooth youre seluen grace
 Or what may been youre helpe / for West nor Est
 Ne saugh I neuere er now / no bryd ne beest 460
 That ferde with hym self / so pitously
 Ye sle me with youre sorwe verraily
 I haue of yow / so greet passioun
 ffor goddes loue / com fro the tree adoun 464

And as I am / a kynges doghter trewe
 If þat I verrailly / the cause knewe
 Of youre disese / if it lay in my myghȝt
 I wolde amenden it' er þat it were nyghȝt 468
 As wisly helpe me / the grete god of kynde
 And herbes / shal I right ynowe yfynde
 To heele with / youre hurtes hastily
 ¶ Tho shrighte this ffaucon / moore yet pitously 472
 Than euer she dide / and fil to grounde anon
 And lith aswowne deed / and lyk a stoon
 Til Canacee / hath in hire lappe hire take
 Vn to the tyme / she gan of swough awake 476
 ¶ And after that she of hir swough gan breyde [leaf 124, back]
 Right in hir haukes ledene / thus she seyde
 That pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 ffelynge his similitude / in peynes smerte 480
 Is preued al day / as men may see
 As wel by werk' as by Auctoritee
 ffor gentil herte / kitheth gentillesse
 I se wel / ye han of my distresse 484
 Compassioun / my faire Canacee
 Of verray wommanly benignytee
 That nature / in youre principles hath yset
 But for noon hope / for to fare the bet' 488
 But for obeye / vn to youre herte free
 And for to maken othere / be war by me
 As by the whelpe / chasted is the leon
 Right for that cause / and for that conclusioun 492
 Whil þat I haue / a leyser and a space
 Myn harm / I wol confessen er I pace
 ¶ And euere / whil þat oon hir sorwe tolde
 That oother weepe / as she to water wolde 496
 Til that the ffaucon / bad hire to be stille
 And with a syk' / right thus she seyde hir wille
 ¶ That I was bred / alas that harde day
 And fostred in a Roche / of Marbul gray 500

So tendrely / that no thyng eyled me
 I nyste nat' what was Aduersitee
 Til I koude flee ful hye / vnder the sky
 Tho dwelte / a Tercelet' me faste by 504
 That semed welle / of alle gentillesse
 Al were he ful of treson / and falsnesse
 It was so wrapped / vnder humble cheere
 And vnder hewe of trouthe / in swich manere 508
 Vnder plesance / and vnder bisy peyne
 That I ne koude han wend' / he koude feyne
 So depe in greyn / he dyed his colours
 Right as a serpent' hit hym vnder floures 512
 Til he may seen / his tyme / for to byte
 Right so this god of loue / this ypocrite
 Dooth so hise cerymonyes and obeisañces
 And kepeth in semblant' alle hise obseruañces 516
 That sowneth / in to gentillesse of loue
 As in a tounge / is al the faire aboue
 And vnder is the corps / swich as ye woot'
 Swich was the ypocrite / bothe coold and hoot' 520
 And in this wise / he serued his entente
 That saue the feend / noon wiste what he mente
 Til he so longe / hadde wopen and compleyned'
 And many a yeer / his seruice to me feyned' 524
 Til that myn herte / to pitous and to nyce [leaf 125]
 Al Innocent' of his corouned malice
 ffor-ferd of his deeth / as thoughte me
 Vpon hise othes / and his seuretee 528
 Graunted hym loue / vp on this condicioun
 That eueremoore / myn honour and renown
 Were saued / bothe priuee and apert'
 This is to seyn / that after his desert' 532
 I yaf hym al myn herte / and my thoght'
 God woot and he / þat ootherwise noght'
 And took his herte / in chaunge for myn for ay
 But sooth is seyde / goon sithen many a day 536

A trewe wight and a theef thenken nat oon
 And whan he saugh / the thyng so fer ygoon
 That I hadde graunted hym / fully my loue
 In swich a gyse / as I haue seyde aboue 540
 And yeuen hym / my trewe herte as free
 As he swoor / he yaf his herte to me
 Anon this Tigre' / ful of doublenesse
 fil on hise knees / with so deuout humblesse 544
 With so heigh reuerence / and as by his cheere
 So lyk' a gentil louere / of manere
 So rauysshed / as it semed for the Ioye
 That neuere Troilus / ne Parys of Troye 548
 Iason certes / ne noon oother man
 Syn Lameth was / þat alderfirst bigan
 To louen two / as writen folk biforn
 Ne neuere / syn the firste man was born 552
 Ne koude man / by twenty thousand part
 Countrefete / the Sophymes of his Art
 Ne were worthy / vnbokelen his galoche
 Ther doublenesse / or feynyng' sholde approche 556
 Ne so koude thanke a wight / as he dide me
 His manere / was an heuene for to see
 Til any womman / were she neuer so wys
 So peynted he / and kembde at point deys 560
 As wel hise wordes / as his contenaunce
 And I loued hym / for his obeisaunce
 And for the trouthe / I demed in his herte
 That if so were / that any thyng hym smerte 564
 Al were it neuer so lite / and I it wiste
 Me thoughte / I felte deeth myn herte twisten
 And shortly / so ferforth / this thyng is went
 That my wyl / was his willes Instrument 568
 This is to seyn / my wyl obeyed his wyl
 In alle thyng' as fer as reson' fil
 Kepyng the boundes / of my worshipe euere
 Ne neuere hadde I thyng' so lief ne leuere 572

As hym god woot' ne neuere shal namo [leaf 125, back]
 This lasteth lenger/ than a yeer or two
 That I supposed of hym / noght but good
 But finally / thus atte laste it stood 576
 That fortune wolde / þat he moste twynne
 Out of that place / which þat I was Inne
 Wher me was wo / that is no questioñ
 I kan nat' make of it discripsioñ 580
 ffor o thyng dare I tellen boldely
 I knowe / what is the peyne of deeth ther by
 Swich harme I felte / for I ne mygh̃te bileue
 So on a day / of me he took his leue 584
 So sorwefully eek' that I wende verrailly
 That he had felt' as mucche harm as I
 Whan þat I herde hym speke / and saugh his hewe
 But natheles / I thoughte / he was so trewe 588
 And eek' þat he / repaire sholde ageyn
 With Inne a litel while / sooth to seyn
 And reson wolde eek' that he moste go
 ffor his honour / as ofte it happeth so 592
 That I made vertu / of necessitee
 And took it wel / syn þat it moste be
 As I best mygh̃te / I hidde fro hym my sorwe
 And took hym by the hond / seint Iohn to borwe 596
 And seyde hym thus / lo I am youre al
 Beth swich / as I to yow / haue been and shal
 What he answerde / it nedeth noght reherce
 Who kan sey bet than he / who kan do werse 600
 Whan he hath al seyd / thanne hath he doon
 Therfore bihoueth hire / a ful long spoon
 That shal ete with a feend' / thus herde I seye
 So atte laste / he moste forth his weye 604
 And forth he fleeth / til he cam ther hym leste
 Whan it cam / hym to purpos / for to reste
 I trowe / he hadde / thilke text in mynde
 That alle thyng' repeiryng to his kynde 608

Gladeth hym self thus seyn men as I gesse ¶ *Reditu suo singula
gaudent/*
 Men louen of propre kynde newefangelnesse
 As briddes doon / that men in cages fede
 ffor though thou nyght *and* day / take of hem hede 612
 And strawe hir Cage / faire and softe as silk'
 And yeue hem sugre / hony / breed and Milk'
 Yet right anon / as that his dore is vppe
 He *with* his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe 616
 And to the wode he wole and wormes ete
 So newefangel / been they of hire mete
 And louen nouelrie / of propre kynde
 No gentillesse of blood / may hem bynde 620
 ¶ So ferde this Tercelet allas the day *[leaf 126]*
 Though he were gentil born / fressh and gay
 And goodlich for to seen / humble and free
 He saugh vp on a tyme a kyte flee 624
 And sodeynly / he loued this kyte so
 That al his loue / is clene fro me ago
 And hath his trouthe / falsed in this wyse
 Thus hath the kyte / my loue in hire *seruyse* 628
 And I am lorn / with outen remedie
 And with that word / this ffaucon gan to crie
 And swowned eft / in Canacees barm
 ¶ Greet was the sorwe / for the haukes harm 632
 That Canacee / and alle hir women made
 They nyste / hou they myghte the ffaucon glade
 But Canacee / hom bereth hire in hir lappe
 And softly / in plastres gan hire wrappe 636
 Ther as she / with hire beek hadde hurt hir selue
 Now kan nat Canacee / but herbes delue
 Out of the ground / and make saues newe
 Of herbes precieuse / and fyne of hewe 640
 To heelen with this [hawk] / fro day to nyght
 She dooth hire bisynesse / and hire fulle myght
 And by hire beddes heed / she made a Mewe
 And couered it with veluettes blewe 644

In signe of trouthe / that is in wommen sene
 And al with oute the Mewe / is peynted grene
 In which ther were ypeynted / alle thise false fowles
 As beth thise tidyues / tercelettes and Owles 648
 Right for despit were peynted hem bisyde
 And pyes on hem / for to crie and chyde
 ¶ Thus lete I Canacee / hir hauk kepyng
 I wol namoore as now / speke of hir ryng 652
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 How that this ffaucon / gat hire loue ageyn
 Repentant as the storie telleth vs
 By mediacion of Cambalus 656
 The kynges sone / of which I yow tolde
 But hennes forth / I wol my proces holde
 To speken of auentures / and of batailles
 That neuere yet was herd / so grete meruailles 660
 ¶ first wol I telle yow / of Cambynskan
 That in his tyme / many a Citee wan
 And after wol I speke of Algarsif
 How that he wan Theodera to his wif 664
 for whom ful ofte / in greet peril he was
 Ne hadde he be holpen / by the steede of bras
 And after / wol I speke of Cambalo
 That faught in lystes / with the bretheren two 668
 For Canacee / er that he myghte hire wynne [leaf 126, back]
 An ther I lefte / I wol ayeyn bigynne

¶ Explicit secunda pars 卐

¶ Incipit pars tercia 卐

Appollo whirleth vp / his Chaar so hye
 Til that the god / Mercurius hous the slye 672

[Rest of the page blank]

¶ Heere folwen the wordes of the frankelyn [leaf 127]
to the Squier and the wordes of the hoost to the
frankelyn

IN feith Squier / thou hast thee wel yquit
And gentilly / I preise wel thy wit
Quod the frankleyn / considerynge thy yowthe
So feelyngly thou spekest sire I allowethe 676
As to my doom / ther is noon that is heere
Of eloquence / that shal be thy peere
If that thou lyue / god yeue thee good chaunce
And in vertu / sende thee continuaunce 680
ffor of thy speche / I haue greet deyntee
I haue a sone / and by the Trinitee
I hadde leuere / than twenty pound worth lond
Though it right now / were fallen in myn hond 684
He were a man / of swich discrecion
As that ye been / fy on possession
But if a man / be vertuous with al
I haue my sone snybbed / and yet shal 688
ffor he to vertu / listneth nat entende
But for to pleye at dees / and to despende
And lese al that he hath / is his vsage
And he hath leuere / talken with a page 692
Than to comune / with any gentil wight
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright/
¶ Straw for youre gentillesse / quod our hoost
What frankleyn / pardie sire wel thou woost 696
That ech of yow / moot tellen atte leste
A tale or two / or breken his biheste
¶ That knowe I wel sire / quod the frankleyn
I prey yow / haueh me nat in desdeyn 700

ELLESMERE 332-333 (6-T. 198)

RUSKIN HOUSE
OXFORD.

Though to this man I speke ¹a word¹ or two [1—1 in margin]
 ¶ Telle on thy tale / with outen wordes mo
 ¶ Gladly sire hoost^r quod he / I wole obeye
 Vn to your wyl / now herkneth what I seye 704
 I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse
 As fer / as that my wittes / wol suffyse
 I prey to god / that it may plesen yow
 Thanne woot I wel / that it is good ynow 708
 ¶ Explicite

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 519, l. 1387. ¶ Aristoclide^s Orocmeni^s tirannus adamauit virginem symphalidem que cum patre occiso ad templum diane & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 519, l. 1399. ¶ Nam hasdrubalis vxor capta & incensa vrbe cum se cerneret a Romanis capienda & cetera. [MS, lf 134, bk.]

p. 519, l. 1405. ¶ primo ponam lucreciam / que violat pudicie nolens superuivere maculam corporis cruore deleuit / [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 519, l. 1409. ¶ Quis valet silencio preterire vij. Milesias virgines que Gallorum & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 519, l. 1414. ¶ Senapho in Ciri maioris scribit / infancia occiso Habradate & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 520, l. 1426. ¶ Democionis Ariopagitarum principis virgo filia & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1431. ¶ Nichanor victis Thebis vnus captiue virginis superatus est. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1434. ¶ Narrant scriptores Grecie & aliam Thebanam virginem & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1437. ¶ Quid loquar Nicerati coniugem pie impaciens iniurie viri mortem & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1442. Alcesten fabule ferunt pro marito Adameto sponte defunctam / et Penolopes pudicia Omeri carmen est [?]. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1445. ¶ Lacedomia quoque poetarum ore cantatur occiso apud Troiam Protheselao & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1451. Arthemisia quoque vxor Mauseoli insignis pudicijs fuisse prohibetur & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 521, l. 1453. Teuta / Illicorum Regina & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 521, l. 1455. ¶ Memorandum strato regulus. ¶ Vidi & omnes pene Barbares capitulo .xxvj°. primi. ¶ Item Cornelia & cetera. ¶ Imitentur g^o nupte Theanam / Cleobiliam / Gorgin¹ / Thymodiam / Claudias atque Cornelias / in fine libri primi. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 521, l. 1465. ¶ Singulas has historias & plures hanc materiam concernentes recitat beatus Ieronimus contra Iouinianum in primo suo libro capitulo .39°. [MS, leaf 135.] [1 or Gorgun]

[THE PROEM.]

¶ The Prologe / of the ffrankeleyns tale 𐝱 [leaf 127, bk]

Thise olde gentil Britoñs / in hir dayes
 Of diuerse auentures / maden layes
 Rymeyd / in hir firste Briton tonge
 Whiche layes / with hir Instrumentz they songe 712
 Or elles redded hem / for hir plesaunce
 And oon of hem / haue I in remembraunce
 Which I shal seyn / with good wyl as I kan
 ¶ But sires / by cause I am a burel man 716
 At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche
 Haue me excused / of my rude speche
 I lerned neuere Rethorik certeyn
 Thyng þat I speke / it moot be bare and pleyn 720
 I sleepe neuere / on the Mount of Pernaso ¶ *Vnde Persias ¶*
 Ne lerned / Marcus Tullius Scithero *fonte labra protul*
 Colours ne knowe I none with outen drede *caballino / nec in*
 But swiche colours / as growen in the Mede 724 *bicipite paruas me*
 Or elles swiche / as men dye or peynte *memini somplasse.*
 Colours of Rethoryk / been to queynte
 My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere
 But if yow list my tale shul ye heere 728

¶ Heere bigynneth / the ffrankeleyns tale /

[Redating of the Franklin.]
IN Armorik / that called is Britayne
 Ther was a knyght / þat loued and dide his payne
 To serue a lady / in his beste wise
 And many a labour / many a greet emprise 732

He for his lady wroghte / er she were wonne
 ffor she was / oon the faireste vnder sonne
 And eek therto / comen of so heigh kynrede
 That wel vnnethes / dorste this knyght for drede 736
 Telle hire his wo / his peyne / and his distresse
 But atte laste / she for his worthynesse
 And namely / for his meke obeysaunce
 Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce 740
 That pryuely / she fil of his accord
 To take hym / for hir housbonde and hir lord
 Of swich lordshipe / as men han ouer hir wyues
 And for to lede / the moore in blisse hir lyues 744
 Of his free wyl / he swoor hire as a knyght
 That neuere in al his lyf he day ne nyght
 Ne sholde vp on hym / take no maistrie
 Agayn hir wyl / ne kithe hire Ialousie 748
 But hire obeye / and folwe hir wyl in al [leaf 126]
 As any louere / to his lady shal
 Saue / that the name of soueraynetee
 That wolde he haue / for shame of his degree 752
 ¶ She thanked hym / and with ful greet humblesse
 She seyde sire / sith of youre gentillesse
 Ye profre me / to haue so large a reyne
 Ne wolde neuere god / bitwixe vs tweyne 756
 As in my gilt were outhur werre or stryf/
 Sire / I wol be / youre humble trewe wyf
 Haue heer my trouthe / til þat myn herte breste
 Thus been they / bothe in quiete and in reste 760
 ¶ ffor o thyng sires / saufly dar I seye
 That freendes / euerych oother moot obeye
 If they wol longe / holden compaignye
 Loue / wol nat been constreyned by maistrie 764
 Whan maistrie comth / the god of loue anon
 Beteth hise wynges / and farewel he is gon
 Loue is a thyng as any Spirit free
 Women of kynde / desiren libertee 768

And nat/ to been constreyned as a thral
 And so doon men / if I sooth seyen shal
 Looke / who þat is moost pacient in loue
 He is / at his auantate al aboue 772
 Pacience / is an heigh vertu certeyn
 ffor it venquysseth / as thise clerkes seyn
 Thynges / þat rigour / sholde neuere atteyne
 ffor euery word / men may nat/ chide or pleyne 776
 Lerneth to suffre / or elles so moot I goon
 Ye shul it lerne / wher so ye wole or noon
 ffor in this world certein / ther no wight is
 That he ne dooth or seith / som tyme amys 780
 Ire / siknesse / or constellacioñ
 Wyn / wo / or chaungynge of complexioñ
 Causeth ful ofte / to doon amys or speken
 On euery wrong^t a man may nat be wreken 784
 After the tyme / moste be temperaunce
 To euery wight^t þat kan on gouernaunce
 And therefore / hath this wise worthy knyght^t
 To lyue in ese / suffraunce hire bihight^t 788
 And she to hym / ful wisly gan to swere
 That neuere / sholde ther be defaute in here
 ¶ Heere may men seen / an humble wys accord^t
 Thus hath she take / hir seruant^t and hir lord^t 792
 Seruant in love / and lord in mariage
 Thanne was he / bothe in lordshipe and seruage
 Seruage[?] nay / but in lordshipe aboue
 Sith he hath / bothe his lady and his loue 796
 His lady certes / and his wyf also [leaf 128, back]
 The which / þat lawe of loue acordeth to
 And whan he was / in this prosperitee
 Hoom with his wyf / he gooth to his contree 800
 Nat fer fro Pedmark/ ther his dwellyng was
 Where as he lyueth / in blisse and in solas
 ¶ Who koude telle / but he hadde wedded be
 The ioye / the ese / and the prosperitee 804

That is / bitwixe an housbonde / and his wyf
 A yeer and moore / lasted this blisful lyf
 Til þat the knyght of which I speke of thus
 That of kayrrud / was cleped Arueragus 808
 Shoope hym to goon / and dwelle a yeer or tweyne
 In Engelond / that cleped was eek Briteyne
 To seke in Armes / worshiþe and honour
 ffor al his lust he sette in swich labour 812
 And dwelled there two yeer / the book seith thus
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of this Arueragus
 And speken I wole / of Dorigene his wyf
 That loueth hire housbonde / as hire hertes lyf 816
 ffor his Absence / wepeth she and siketh
 As doon thise noble wyues / whan hem liketh
 She moorneth / waketh / wayleth / fasteth / pleyneth
 Desir of his presence / hire so distreyneth 820
 That al this wyde world / she sette at noght
 Hire freendes / whiche þat knewe hir heuy thoght
 Conforten hire / in al þat euer they may
 They prechen hire / they telle hire nyght and day 824
 That causelees / she sleeth hir self allas
 And euery confort possible in this cas
 They doon to hire / with all hire bisynesse
 Al / for to make hire / leue hire heuynesse 828
 ¶ By proces / as ye knowen euerichoon
 Men may so longe / grauen in a stoon
 Til som figure / ther inne emprented be
 So longe han they comforted hire / til she 832
 Receyued hath / by hope and by resoñ
 "The emprentyng" of hire consolaciõ
 Thurgh which / hir grete sorwe gan aswage
 She may nat alwey / duren in swich rage 836
 ¶ And eek Arueragus / in al this care
 Hath sent hire lettres hoom / of his welfare
 And þat he wol come hastily agayn
 Or elles hadde this sorwe / hir herte slayn 840

¶ Hire freendes sawe / hir sorwe gan to slake
 And preyde hire on knees / for goddes sake
 To come / and romen hire in compaignye
 Away to dryue / hire derke fantasye 844
 And finally / she graunted that requeste [leaf 129]
 ffor wel she saugh / that it was for the beste
 ¶ Now stood hire Castel / faste by the See
 And often / with hire freendes walketh shee 848
 Hire to disporte / vp on the bank an heigh
 Where / as she / many a shipe and barge seigh
 Seillynge hir cours / where as hem liste go
 But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo 852
 ffor to hir self ful ofte allas seith she
 Is ther no shipe / of so manye as I se
 Wol bryngen hom my lord / thanne were myn herte
 Al warished / of hise bittre peynes smerte 856
 ¶ Another tyme / ther wolde she sitte and thynke
 And caste hir eyen / downward fro the brynke
 But whan she saugh / the grisly Rokkes blake
 ffor verray feere / so wolde hir herte quake 860
 That on hire feet she myghte hire noght sustene
 Thanne wolde she / sitte adoun vpon the grene
 And pitously / in to the see biholde
 And seyn right thus / with sorweful sikes colde 864
 ¶ Eterne god / that thurgh thy purueiaunce
 Ledest the world / by certein gouernaunce
 In ydel as men seyn / ye no thyng make
 But lord / thise grisly / feendly Rokkes blake 868
 That semen rather / a foul confusion
 Of werk than any fair creacion
 Of swich a parfit wys god and a stable
 Why han ye wrought this werk vnreasonable 872
 ffor by this werk / South / North / ne West ne East
 Ther nys yfostred / man / ne bryd ne beest
 It dooth no good to my wit but anoyeth
 Se ye nat lord / how mankynde it destroyeth 876

An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
 Han Rokkes slayn / al be they nat in mynde
 Which mankynde / is so fair part of thy werk'
 That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk' 880
 ¶ Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee
 Toward mankynde / but how thanne may it bee
 That ye swiche meenes make / it to destroyen
 Whiche meenes do no good / but euere anoyen 884
 I woot wel / clerkes wol seyn as hem leste
 By Argumentz / that al is for the beste
 Though I kan / the causes nat yknowe
 But thilke god / that made wynd to blowe 888
 As kepe my lord / this my conclusioun
 To clerkes lete I / al this disputioun
 But wolde god / that alle thise Rokkes blake
 Were sonken in to helle for his sake 892
 Thise Rokkes / sleen myn herte for the feere [leaf 129, back]
 Thus wolde she seyn / with many a pitous teere
 ¶ Hire freendes sawe / that it was no disport
 To romen by the see / but discomfort 896
 And shopen for to pleyen / somwher elles
 They leden hire / by Ryueres and by welles
 And eek / in othere places delitables
 They dauncen / and they pleyen / at ches and tables 900
 ¶ So on a day / right in the morwe tyde
 Vn to a gardyn / that was ther bisyde
 In which / that they hadde maad hir ordinaunce
 Of vitaille / and of oother purueiaunce 904
 They goon and pleye hem / al the longe day
 And this was / in the sixte morwe of May
 Which May hadde peynted / with his softe shoures
 This gardyn / ful of leues and of floures 908
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde / this gardyn trewely
 That neuere / was ther gardyn of swich prys
 But if it were / the verray Paradys 912

The odour of floures / and the fresshe sighte
 Wolde han maked / any herte lighte
 That euere was born / but if to greet siknesse
 Or to greet sorwe / helde it in distresse 916
 So ful it was / of beautee with plesaunce
 At after dyner / gonne they to daunce
 And synge also / saue Dorigen allone
 Which made alwey / hir compleint *and* hir moone 920
 ffor she ne saugh hym / on the daunce go
 That was hir housbonde / and hir loue also
 But natheles / she moste a tyme abyde
 And with good hope / lete hir sorwe slyde 924
 ¶ Vp on this daunce / amonges othere men
 Daunced a squier / biforn Dorigen
 That fressher was / and Iolyer of array
 As to my doom / than is the Monthe of May 928
 He syngeth / daunceth / passynge any man
 That is // or was / sith þat the world bigan
 Ther-with he was / if men sholde hym discryue
 Oon / of the beste farynge man on lyue 932
 Yong/ strong/ right vertuous / and riche *and* wys
 And wel biloued / and holden in greet prys
 And shortly / if the sothe I tellen shal
 Vnwityng of this Dorigen at al 936
 This lusty Squier / seruant to Venus
 Which that ycleped was Aurelius
 Hadde loued hire / best of any creature
 Two yeer and moore / as was his auenture 940
 But neuere / dorste he tellen hire his greuaunce [leaf 130]
 With outen coppe / he drank al his penaunce
 He was despeyred / no thyng dorste he seye
 Saue in his songs / somewhat wolde he wreye 944
 His wo / as in a general compleynyng
 He seyde he louede / and was biloued no thyng
 Of swich matere / made he manye layes
 Songs / compleintes / roundels / virelayes 948

How that/ he dorste nat/ his sorwe telle
 But langwischeth / as a furye dooth in helle
 And dye he moste he seyde / as dide Ekko ¶ *Methamorphose* Δ
 ffor Narcisus / that dorste nat telle hir wo 952
 In oother manere / than ye heere me seye
 Ne dorste he nat. to hire his wo biwreye
 Saue that paraenture / som tyme at daunces
 Ther yong folk/ kepen hir obseruaunces 956
 It may wel be / he looked on hir face
 In swich a wise / as man þat asketh grace
 But no thyng wiste she / of his entente
 Natheles / it happed er they thennes wente 960
 By cause / that he was hire Neighebour
 And was a man / of worshipe and honour
 And hadde yknowen hym / of tyme yore
 They fille in speche / and forthe moore and moore 964
 Vn to this purpos / drough Aurelius
 And whan he saugh his tyme / he seyde thus
 ¶ Madame quod he / by god þat this world made
 So that I wiste / it myghte youre herte glade 968
 I wolde that day / that youre Arueragus
 Went ouer the see / that I Aurelius
 Hadde went ther neuere I sholde haue come agayn
 ffor wel I woot my seruyce is in vayn 972
 My gerdon is / but brestyng of myn herte
 Madame / reweth vpon my peynes smerte
 ffor with a word / ye may me sleen or saue
 Heere at youre feet/ god wolde þat I were graue 976
 I ne haue as now / no leyser moore to seye
 Haue mercy sweete / or ye wol do me deye
 ¶ She gan to looke / vp on Aurelius
 Is this youre wyl quod she / and sey ye thus ? 980
 Neuere erst quod she / ne wiste I what ye mente
 But now Aurelie / I knowe youre entente
 By thilke god / that yaf me soule and lyf
 Ne shal I neuere / been vntrewe wyf 984

In word ne werk / as fer as I haue wit /
 I wol been his / to whom þat I am knyȝt
 Taak this for fynal answer / as of me
 But after that in pley thus seyde she 988
 ¶ Aurelie quod she / by heighe god aboue [leaf 130, back]
 Yet wolde I graunte yow / to been youre loue
 Syn I yow se / so pitously complayne
 Looke what day / that endelong Britayne 992
 Ye remoeue alle the Rokkes / stoon by stoon
 That they ne lette / shipe ne boot to goon
 I seye / whan ye han maad / the coost so clene
 Of Rokkes / that ther nys no stoon ysene 996
 Thanne wol I / loue yow best of any man
 Haue heer my trouthe / in al þat euere I kan
 ¶ Is ther noon oother grace / in yow quod he ?
 ¶ No / by that lord quod she that maked me 1000
 ffor wel I woot þat it shal neuer bityde
 Lat swiche folies / out of youre herte slyde
 What deyntee sholde a man / han in his lyf
 ffor to go loue / another mannes wyf 1004
 That hath hir body / whan so þat hym liketh
 ¶ Aurelius / ful ofte soore siketh
 Wo was Aurelie / whan þat he this herde
 And with a sorweful herte / he thus answerde 1008
 ¶ Madame quod he / this were an impossible
 Thanne moot I dye / of sodeyn deth horrible
 And with that word / he turned hym anon
 Tho coome / hir othere freendes many oon 1012
 And in the Aleyes / romeden vp and doun
 And no thyng wiste / of this conclusioun
 But sodeynly / bigonne reuel newe
 Til that the brighte sonne / loste his hewe 1016
 ffor Thorisonte / hath rest the sonne his lyght
 This is as muche to seye / as it was nyght
 And hoom they goon / in ioye and in solas
 Saue only / wrecche Aurelius allas 1020

He to his hous is goon / with sorweful herte
 He seeth / he may nat fro his deeth asterte
 Hym semed / that he felte his herte colde
 Vp to the heuene / hise handes he gan holde 1024
 And on hise knowes bare / he sette hym down
 And in his rauyng^r seyde his orisoun
 ffor verray wo / out of his wit he breyde
 He nyte what he spak^r but thus he seyde 1028
 With pitous herte / his pleynt hath he bigonne
 Vn to the goddes / and first vn to the sonne
 ¶ He seyde Appollo / god and gouernour ¶ The compleint/ of
 Of euery plaunte / herbe / tree and flour Aurelius/ to the goddes
 and to the sonne ☉
 That yeuest^r after thy declinacion
 To ech of hem / his tyme and his seson
 As thyn herberwe / chaungeth lowe or heighe
 Lord Phebus / cast thy merciable eighe [nearist] 1036
 On wrecche Aurelie / which am but lorn
 Lo lord / my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
 With oute gilt but thy benignytee
 Vpon my dedly herte / haue som pitee 1040
 ffor wel I woot / lord Phebus / if yow lest^r
 Ye may me helpen / saue my lady best^r
 Now voucheth sauf / þat I may yow deuyse
 How þat I may been holpen / and in what wyse 1044
 ¶ Your blisful suster / Lucina the sheene
 That of the see / is chief goddesse and queene
 Though Neptunus / haue deitee in the See
 Yet Emperisse / abouen hym is she 1048
 Ye knowen wel lord / that right as hir desir
 Is to be quyked / and lightned of youre fir
 ffor which / she folweth yow / ful bisily
 Right/ so / the see desireth naturelly 1052
 To folwen hire / as she that is goddesse
 Bothe in the see / and Ryueres moore and lesse
 Wherefore lord Phebus / this is my requeste
 Do this miracle / or do myn herte breste 1056

That now next^t at this opposicion
 Which in the signe / shal be of the leon
 As preieth hire / so greet a flood to brynge
 That fyue fadme at the leeste it ouersprynge 1060
 The hyste Rokke / in Armorik/ Briteyne
 And lat this flood / endure yeres tweyne
 Thanne *certes* / to my lady may I seye
 Holdeth youre heste / the Rokkes been aweye 1064
 ¶ Lord Phebus / dooth this miracle for me
 Preye hire / she go no faster cours than ye
 I seye / preyeth your suster / that she go
 No faster cours than ye / thise yeres two 1068
 Thanne shal she been / euene atte fulle alway
 And spryng flood / laste bothe nyght^t and day
 And but she vouche sauf / in swich manere
 To graunte me / my souereyn lady deere 1072
 Prey hire / to synken euery Rok^t adoun
 In to / hir owene dirke Regioun
 Vnder the ground / ther Pluto dwelleth Inne
 Or neuere mo / shal I my lady wyne 1076
 Thy Temple in Delphos / wol I barefoot seke
 Lord Phebus / se the teeris on my cheke
 And of my payne / haue som compassioun
 And with that word / in swowne he fil adoun 1080
 And longe tyme / he lay forth in a traunce
 ¶ His brother/ which þat knew of his penaunce
 Vp caughte hym / and to bedde he hath hym broght^t
 Dispeyred / in this torment^t and this thoght^t 1084
 Lete I / this woful creature lye [leaf 131, back]
 Chese he for me / wheither he wol lyue or dye
 A rueragus / with heele and greet honour
 As he / þat was / of chivalrie the flour 1088
 Is comen hoom / and othere worthy men
 O blisful / artow now / thou Dorigen
 That hast^t thy lusty housbonde in thyne Armes
 The freshe knyght^t the worthy man of Armes 1092

That loueth thee / as his owene hertes lyf
 No thyng list hym / to been ymaginatyf
 If any wight had spoke / whil he was oute
 To hire of loue / he hadde of it no doute 1096
 He noght entendeth / to no swich mateere
 But daunceth / Iusteth / maketh hire good cheere
 And thus / in ioye and blisse / I lets hem dwelle
 And of the sike Aurelius / I wol yow telle 1100
IN langour / and in torment furyus
 Two yeer and moore / lay wrecche Aurelyus
 Er any foot. he myghte on erthe gon
 Ne confort in this tyme / hadde he noon 1104
 Saue of his brother / which put was a clerk
 He knew of al this wo / and al this werk
 ffor to noon oother creature certeyn
 Of this matere / he dorste no word seyn 1108
 Vnder his brest he baar it moore secree
 Than euere dide Pamphilus for Galathee
 His brest was hool / with oute for to sene
 But in his herte / ay was the Arwe kene 1112
 And wel ye knowe / that of a Sursanure
 In Surgerye / is perilous the cure
 But men myghte touche the Arwe / or come therby
 His brother / weepe / and wayled pryuely 1116
 Til atte laste / hym fil in remembraunce
 That whiles he was / at Orlens in ffrance
 As yonge clerkes / that been lykerous
 To reden Artes / that been curious 1120
 Seken / in euery halke / and euery herne
 Particuler sciences / for to lerne
 He hym remembred / that vpon a day
 At Orlens in studie / a book he say 1124
 Of Magyk / natureel / which his felawe
 That was that tyme / a Bachelor of lawe
 Al were he ther / to lerne another craft
 Hadde priuely / vpon his desk ylaft 1128

¶ Pamphilus ad
 Galatheam / vulneror
 & clausum porto sub
 pectore talum & cetera

Which book' spak muchel / of the operaciõs
 Touchyng / the eighte and twenty mansiõs
 That longen to the moone / and swich folye
 As in oure dayes / is nat worth a flye 1132
 ffor hooly chirches feith / in oure bileue [leaf 132]
 Ne suffreth noon illusioñ vs to greue
 And whan this book / was in his remembraunce
 Anon for ioie / his herte gan to daunce 1136
 And to hym self he seyde pryuely
 My brother / shal be warissshed hastily
 ffor I am siker / þat ther be sciences
 By wh[i]c[h]e / men make diuerse apparences 1140
 Swiche / as thise subtile tregetours pleye
 ffor ofte at feestes / haue I wel herd seye
 That tregetours / with Inne an halle large
 Haue maad come In / a water and a barge 1144
 And in the halle / rowen vp and down
 Somtyme / hath semed come a grym leoun
 And somtyme floures sprynge / as in a Mede
 Somtyme a Vyne / and grapes white and rede 1148
 Somtyme a Castel / al of lym and stoon
 And whan hym lyked / voyded it anoon
 Thus semed it to euery mannes sighte
 ¶ Now thanne conclude I thus / þat if I myghte 1152
 At Orliens / som oold felawe yfynde
 That hadde / this moones mansions in mynde
 Or oother Magyk' natureel aboue
 He sholde wel make / my brother han his loue 1156
 ffor with an apparence / a clerk' may make
 To mannes sighte / þat alle the Rokkes blake
 Of Britaigne / weren yvoyded euerichon
 And shippes / by the brynke comen and gon 1160
 And in swich forme / enduren a wowke or two
 Thanne were my brother /' warissshed of his wo
 Thanne moste she nedes / holden hire biheste
 Or elles / he shal shame hire atte leeste 1164

- ¶ What sholde I make / a lenger tale of this
 Vn to his brotheres bed / he comen is
 And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon
 To Orlens / that he vp stirte anon 1168
 And on his wey / forthward thanne is he fare
 In hope / for to been lissed of his care
 ¶ Whan they were come / almoost to that Citee
 But if it were / a two furlong or thre 1172
 A yong clerk romynge by hym self they mette
 Which þat in latyn / thriftily hem grette
 And after that he seyde a wonder thyng
 I knowe quod he / the cause of youre comyng 1176
 And er they ferther / any foote wente
 He tolde hem / al that was in hire entente
 ¶ This Briton clerk hym asked of felawes
 The whiche þat he had knowe / in olde dawes 1180
 And he answerde hym / that they dede were [leaf 135, back]
 ffor which / he weep ful ofte many a teere
 ¶ Doun of his hors / Aurelius lighte anon
 And with this Magicien / forth is he gon 1184
 Hoom to his hous / and maden hem wel at ese
 Hem lakked no vitaille / þat myghte hem plesse
 So wel arrayed hous / as ther was oon
 Aurelius in his lyf / saugh neuere noon 1188
 ¶ He shewed hym / er he wente to Sopeer
 fforestes / Parkes / ful of wilde deer
 Ther saugh he hertes / with hir hornes hye
 The grettteste / that euere were seyn with eye 1192
 He saugh of hem / an hondred slayn with houndes
 And somme with Arwes blede / of bittre woundes
 ¶ He saugh / whan voyded were thise wilde deer
 Thise ffaconers / vpon a fair Ryuer 1196
 That with hir haukes / han the heron slayn
 ¶ Tho saugh he knyghtes / iustying in a playn
 And after this / he dide hym swich plesaunce
 That he hym shewed / his lady on a daunce 1200

On which hym self / he daunced / as hym thoughte
 And whan this Maister / pat this Magyk wroughte
 Saugh it was tyme / he clapte hise handes two
 And farewel / al oure reuel was ago 1204
 And yet remoeued they neuere / out of the hous
 Whil they saugh / al this sighte merueillous
 But in his studie / ther as hise bookes be
 They seten stille / and no wight but they thre 1208
 ¶ To hym / this Maister called his Squier
 And seyde hym thus / is redy oure soper
 Almoost an houre it is I vndertake
 Sith I yow bad / oure soper for to make 1212
 Whan that thise worthy men / wenten with me
 In to my studie / ther as my bookes be
 ¶ Sire quod this Squier / whan it liketh yow
 It is al redy / though ye wol right now 1216
 Go we thanne soupe quod he / as for the beste
 This amorous folk / som tyme moote han hir reste
 ¶ At after soper / fille they in tretee
 What somme / sholde this Maistres gerdon be 1220
 To remoeuen / alle the Rokkes of Britayne
 And eek from Gerounde / to the mouth of Sayne
 ¶ He made it straunge / and swoor / so god hym saue
 Lasse than a thousand pound / he wolde nat haue 1224
 Ne gladly / for that somme he wolde nat goon
 ¶ Aurelius / with blisful herte anoon
 Answerde thus / fy on a thousand pound
 This wyde world / which that men seye is round 1228
 ¶ I wolde it yeue / if I were lord of it [leaf 133]
 This bargayn is ful dryue / for we been knyht
 Ye shal be payed / trewely by my trouthe
 But looketh now / for no necligence or slouth 1232
 Ye tarie vs heere / no lenger than to morwe
 ¶ Nay quod this clerk / haue heer my feith to borwe
 ¶ To bedde is goon Aurelius / whan hym leste
 And wel ny / al that nyght he hadde his reste 1236

What for his labour / and his hope of blisse
 His woful herte / of penaunce hadde a lisse
 ¶ Vpon the morwe / whan þat it was day
 To Britaigne / tooke they the righte way 1240
 Aurelius / and this Magicien bisyde
 And been descended / ther they wolde abyde
 And this was / as thise bookes me remembre
 The colde / frosty seson of Decembre 1244
Phebus wax old / and hewed lyk laton
 That in his hoothe declynacion
 Shoon as the burned gold / with stremes brighte
 But now in Capricorn / adoun he lighte 1248
 Where as he shoon ful pale / I dar wel seyn
 The bittre frostes / with the sleet and reyn
 Destroyed hath the grene / in euery yerf
 Ianus sit by the fyr / with double berd ¶ Ianus biceps ☿
 And drynketh / of his bugle horn the wyn
 Biforn hym / stant brawen / of the tusked swyn
 And Nowel / crieth euery lusty man
 ¶ Aurelius / in al that euere he kan 1256
 Dooth to his Maister / chiere and reuerence
 And preyeth hym / to doon his diligence
 To bryngen hym / out of his peynes smerte
 Or with a swerd / þat he wolde slitte his herte 1260
 ¶ This subtil clerk swich routhe had of this man
 That nyght and day / he spedde hym þat he kan
 To wayten a tyme / of his conclusioñ
 This is to seye / to maken illusiõ 1264
 By swich a apparence or Iogelrye
 I ne kan no termes / of Astrologye
 That she and euery wight sholde wene and seye
 That of Britaigne / the Rokkes were aweye 1268
 Or ellis / they were sonken vnder grounde
 So atte laste / he hath his tyme yfounde
 To maken hise Iapes / and his wrecchednesse
 Of swich / a superstitious cursednesse 1272

Hise tables tolletanes / forth he brought
 ful wel corrected / ne ther lakked nought
 Neither his collect^r ne hise expans yeeris
 Ne hise rootes / ne hise othere geeris 1276
 As been his centris / and hise Argumentz (leaf 133, back)
 And hise proporcioneles conuenientz
 ffor hise equacions / in euery thyng^r
 And by his .8. speere in his wirkyng^r 1280
 He knew ful wel / how fer Alnath was shoue ¶ Alnath dicitur
 ffro the heed / of thilke fixe Aries aboue prima mansio
 That in the .9. speere considered is ¶ In nona spera ☽
 ful subtilly / he hadde kalkuled al this 1284
 ¶ Whan he hadde founde / his firste mansioñ
 He knew the remenañt by proporcioñ
 And knew the arisyng^r of his moone weel
 And in whos face / and terme and euerydeel 1288
 And knew ful wel / the moones mansioñ
 Acordaunt to his operacioñ
 And knew also / hise othere obseruañces
 ffor swiche illusioñs / and swiche meschañces 1292
 As hethen folk / vseden in thilke dayes
 ffor which / no lenger maked he delayes
 But thurgh his magik / for a wyke or tweye
 It semed / that alle the Rokkes were awaye 1296
 ¶ Aurelius / which þat yet despeired is
 Wher he shal han his loue / or fare amys
 Awaiteth nyght and day / on this myracle
 And whan he knew / þat ther was noon obstacle 1300
 That voyded were / thise Rokkes euerychon
 Doun / to hise Maistres feet^r he fil anon
 And seyde / I woful wrecche Aurelius
 Thanke yow lord / and lady myn Venus 1304
 That me han holpen / fro my cares colde
 And to the temple / his wey forth hath he holde
 Where as he knew / he sholde his lady see
 And whan he saugh his tyme / anon right hec 1308

With dredful herte / and with ful humble cheere
 Salewed hath / his souereyn lady deere
My righte lady / quod this woful man
 Whom I moost drede and loue as I best kan 1312
 And lothest were / of al this world displese
 Nere it þat I for yow / haue swich disease
 That I moste dyen heere / at youre foot anon
 Noght wolde I telle / how me is wo bigon 1316
 But certes / outhur moste I dye or pleyne
 Ye sle me giltles / for verray peyne
 But of my deeth / thogh þat ye haue no routhe
 Auyseth yow / er þat ye breke youre trouthe 1320
 Repenteth yow / for thilke god aboue
 Er ye me sleen / by cause þat I yow loue
 ffor madame / wel ye woot what ye han highȝ
 Nat þat I chalange / any thyng of right 1324
 Of yow my souereyn lady / but youre grace [leaf 134]
 But in a gardyn yond / at swich a place
 Ye woot right wel / what ye bihighȝten me
 And in myn hand / youre trouthe plighȝten ye 1328
 To loue me best god woot ye seyde so
 Al be / þat I vnworthy be therto
 Madame I speke it / for the honour of yow
 Moore than to saue / myn hertes lyf right now 1332
 I haue do so / as ye comanded me
 And if ye vouche sauȝ / ye may go see
 Dooth as yow list haue youre biheste in mynde
 ffor quyȝt or deed / right there ye shal me fynde 1336
 In yow lith al / to do me lyue or deye
 But wel I woot the Rokkes been aweye
 ¶ He taketh his leue / and she astonied stood
 In al hir face / nas a drope of blood 1340
 She wende neuere / han come in swich a trappe
 Allas quod she / þat euere this sholde happe
 ffor wende I neuere / by possibilitee
 That swich a Monstre / or merueille myȝhte be 1344

It is / agayns the proces of nature
 And hoom she goth / a sorweful creature
 ffor verrey feere / vnnethe may she go
 She wepeth / wailleth / al a day or two 1348
 And swowneth / that it routhe was to see
 But why it was / to no wight tolde shee
 ffor out of towne / was goon Arueragus
 But to hir self/ she spak' and seyde thus 1352
 With face pale / and with ful sorweful cheere
 In hire compleynt' as ye shal after heere ¶ The compleynt/ of
 Dorigene ayeys Fortune
 ¶ Allas quod she / on thee ffortune I pleyne
 That vnwar / wrapped hast me in thy cheyne 1356
 ffor which tescape / woot I no scour
 Saue oonly / deeth or dishonour
 Oon of thise two / bihoueth me to chese
 But natheles / yet haue I leuere to lese 1360
 My lif/ than of my body haue a shame
 Or knowe my seluen fals / or lese my name
 And with my deth / I may be quyt' ywis
 Hath ther nat/ many a noble wyf er this [Latin note, p. 325.]
 And many a mayde / yslayn hir self allas
 Rather / than with hir body doon trespas
 ¶ Yis certes / lo thise stories beren witnesse
 Whan .xxx. tirauntz / ful of cursednesse 1368
 Hadde slayn Phidon / in Atthenes at feste
 They comanded / hise doghtres for tareste
 And bryngen hem / biforn hem in despit'
 Al naked / to fulfille hir foul delit' 1372
 And in hir fadres blood / they made hem daunce [134, bk.]
 Vpon the pauement' god yeue hem myschaunce
 ffor which / thise woful maydens ful of drede
 Rather / than they wolde lese hir maydenhede 1376
 They priuely / been stirt/ in to a welle
 And dreynthe hem seluen / as the bookes telle
 They of Mecene / leete enquere and seke
 Of Lacedomye / fifty maydens eke ¶ Cum .50. vir-
 gines lacedoniensium
 Memmi violare
 temptament / Δ

On whiche / they wolden doon hir lecherye
 But was ther noon of al that compaignye
 That she nas slayn / and with a good entente
 Chees / rather for to dye than assente 1384
 To been oppressed / of hir maydenhede
 Why sholde I thanne / to dye been in drede

Lo ek / the tiraunt Aristoclides [Latin note, p. 499]
 That loued a mayden / heet Stympthalides 1388
 Whan that hir fader / slayn was on a nyght
 Vn to Dianas temple / goth she right
 And hente the ymage / in hir handes two
 ffor which ymage / wolde she neuere go 1392
 No wight / ne myghte hir handes of it arace
 Til she was slayn / right in the selue place
 ¶ Now sith þat maydens / hadden swich despit
 To been defouled / with mannes foul delit 1396
 Wel oghte a wyf / rather hir seluen slee
 Than be defouled / as it thynketh me

What shal I seyn / of Hasdrubales wyf [Latin note, p. 499]
 That at Cartage / birafte hir self hir lyf 1400
 ffor whan she saugh / that Romayns wan the toun
 She took hir children alle / and skipte adoun
 In to the fyr / and chees rather to dye
 Than any Romayn / dide hire vileynye 1404

Hath nat Lucesse / yslayn hir self allas [Latin note, p. 499]
 At Rome / whan she oppressed was
 Of Tarquyn / for hire thoughte it was a shame
 To lyuen / whan she had lost hir name 1408

The seuene maydens / of Melesie also [Latin note, p. 499]
 Han slayn hem self / for drede and wo
 Rather than folk of Gawle / hem sholde oppresse
 Mo than a thousand stories / as I gesse 1412
 Koude I now telle / as touchynge this mateere

Whan habradate was slayn / his wyf so deere [Latin note, p. 499]
 Hirseluene slow / and leet hir blood to glyde
 In habradates woundes depe and wyde 1416

And seyde my body / at the leeste way
 Ther shal no wight / defoulen if I may
 ¶ What sholde I / mo ensamples heer of sayn
 Sith that so manye / han hem seluen slayn 1420
 Wel rather / than they wolde defouled be [leaf 135]
 I wol conclude / that it is bet for me
 To sleen my self / than been defouled thus
 I wol be trewe / vn to Arueragus 1424
 Or rather / sleen my self in som manere
 A s dide / Demociones doghter deere [Latin note, p. 499]
 By cause / þat she wolde nat defouled be
 O Cedasus / it is ful greet pitee ¶ Quo ore laudande sunt
 To reden / how thy doghtren deyde allas Cedasij filie & cetera
 That slowe hem self / for swich manere cas
 A s greet a pitee was it / or wel moore [Latin note, p. 499]
 The Theban mayden / that for Nichanore 1432
 Hir seluen slow / right for swich manere wo
 A nother Theban mayden / dide right so [Latin note, p. 499]
 ffor oon of Macidonye / hadde hire oppressed
 She with hire deeth / hir maydenhede redressed 1436
 W hat shal I seye of Nicerates wyf [Latin note, p. 499]
 That for swich cas / birafte hir self hir lyf /
 H ow trewe eek was / to Alcebiades ¶ Alcebiades ille socrati-
 His loue / rather for to dyen chees ticus victus & cetera 1440
 Than for to suffre / his body vnburied be
 L o which a wyf / was Alceste quod she [Latin note, p. 499]
 W hat seith Omer / of goode Penelopee
 Al Grece / knoweth of hire chastitee 1444
 P ardee / of Lacedomya / is writen thus [Latin note, p. 499]
 That whan at Troie / was slayn Protheselaus
 No lenger / wolde she lyue / after his day
 T he same / of noble Porcia telle I may ¶ Porcia sine Bruto
 With oute Brutus / koude she nat lyue viuere non potuit
 To whom she hadde / al hool hir herte yeue
 T he parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie [Latin note, p. 499]
 Honored is / thurgh al the Barbarie 1452

O Teuta queene / thy wyfly chastitee [*Latin note, p. 499*]
 To alle wyues / may a Mirour bee

The same thyng / I seye of Bilyea [*Latin note, p. 499*]

Of Rodogone / and eek Valeria 1456

¶ Thus pleyne Dorigene / a day or tweye

Purposynge euere / that she wolde deye

¶ But natheles / vpon the thridde nyght

Hoom cam Arueragus / this worthy knyght 1460

And asked hire / why that she weepe so soore

And she gan wepen / euer lenger the moore

¶ Allas quod she / that euere I was born

Thus haue I seyde quod she / thus haue I sworn 1464

And toold hym al / as ye han herd bifore [*Latin note, p. 499*]

It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore

¶ This housbonde / with glad chiere in frendly wyse

Answerde and seyde / as I shal yow deuise 1468

Is ther oght elles Dorigen / but this ? [*leaf 135, back*]

¶ Nay nay quod she / god helpe me so as wys

This is to muche / and it were goddes wille

¶ Ye wyf quod he / lat slepen that is stille 1472

It may be wel / parauenture yet to day

Ye shul youre trouthe / holden by my fay

ffor god so wisly / haue mercy vp on me

I hadde wel leuere / ystiked for to be 1476

ffor verray loue / which that I to yow haue

But if ye sholde / youre trouthe kepe *and* saue

Trouthe / is the hyeste thyng þat man may kepe

But *with* that word / he brast anon to wepe 1480

And seyde / I yow forbode / vp peyne deeth

That neuere / whil thee lasteth / lyf ne breeth

To no wight telle thou of this auenture

As I may best I wol my wo endure 1484

Ne make / no contenance of heynesse

That folk / of yow / may demen harm or gesse

¶ And forth / he cleped / a squier and a mayde

Gooth forth anon / with Dorigen he sayde 1488

And bryngeth hire / to swich a place anon
 They take hir leue / and on hir wey they gon
 But they ne wiste / why she thider wente
 He nolde / no wight tellen his entente 1492
 ¶ Parauenture / an heepe of yow ywis
 Wol holden hym / a lewed man in this
 That he wol putte / his wyf in Iupartie
 Herkneþ the tale / er ye vp on hire crie 1496
 She may haue bettre ffortune / than yow semeth
 And whan þat ye han herd the tale / demeth
 This squier / which þat highte Aurelius
 On Dorigen / that was so amorus 1500
 Of auenture / happed hire to meete
 Amydde the toun / right in the quykkest strete
 As she was boun / to goon the wey forth right
 Toward the gardyn / ther as she had hight 1504
 And he was / to the gardynward also
 ffor wel he spyed / whan she wolde go
 Out of hir hous / to any maner place
 But thus they mette / of auenture or grace 1508
 And he salweth hire / with glad entente
 And asked of hire / whiderward she wente
 ¶ And she answerde / half as she were mad
 Vn to the gardyn / as myn housbonde bad 1512
 My trouthe for to holde / allas / allas
 ¶ Aurelius / gan wondren on this cas
 And in his herte / hadde greet compassion
 Of hire / and of hire lamentacion 1516
 ¶ And of Arueragus the worthy knyght [leaf 136]
 That bad hire holden / al þat she had hight
 So looth hym was / his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe
 And in his herte / he caughte of this greet rounthe 1520
 Considerynge / the beste on euery syde
 That fro his lust yet were hym leuere abyde
 Than doon / so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse
 Agayns franchise / and alle gentillesse 1524

ffor which / in fewe wordes seyde he thus
 ¶ Madame / seyeth to youre lord Arueragus
 That sith I se his grete gentillesse
 To yow / and eek I se wel youre distresse 1528
 That him were leuere han shame / and þat were routhe
 Than ye to me / sholde breke thus youre trouthe
 I haue wel leuere / euere to suffre wo
 Than I departe / the loue bitwix yow two 1532
 I yow relese madame / in to youre hond
 Quyt' euery 'surement' and euery bond [1 or surement]
 That ye han maad to me / as heer biforn
 Sith thilke tyme / which þat ye were born 1536
 My trouthe I pligh'te / I shal yow neuer repreue
 Of no biheste / and heere I take my leue
 As of the treweste / and the beste wyf/
 That euere yet' I knew in al my lyf/ 1540
 But euery wyf/ be war of hire biheeste
 On Dorigene / remembreth / atte leeste
 Thus kan a Squier/ doon a gentil dede
 As wel as kan a knyght with outen drede 1544
 ¶ She thonketh hym / vp on hir knees al bare
 And hoom / vn to hir housbonde is she fare
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd me sayd
 And be ye siker / he was so weel apayd 1548
 That it were impossible / me to wryte
 What sholde I lenger / of this cas endyte
 ¶ Arueragus / and Dorigene his wyf
 In souereyn blisse / leden forth hir lyf 1552
 Neuere eft' ne was ther Angre hem bitwene
 He cherisseth hire / as though she were a queene
 And she was to hym / trewe for euere moore
 Of thise folk / ye gete of me namoore 1556
 Aurelius / that his cost' hath al forlorn
 A Curseth the tyme / þat euere he was born
 Allas quod he / allas that I bihigh'te
 Of pured gold / a thousand pound of wigh'te 1560

Vn to this Philosophre / how shal I do
 I se namoore / but that I am fordo
 Myn heritage / moot I nedes selle
 And been a beggere / heere may I nat dwelle 1564
 And ahamen / al my kynrede in this place (leaf 136, back)
 But I of hym / may gete bettre grace
 But natheles / I wole of hym assaye .
 At certeyn dayes / yeer by yeer to paye 1568
 And thanke hym / of his grete curteisye
 My trouthe wol I kepe / I wol nat lye
 ¶ With herte soor / he gooth vn to his cofre
 And broghte gold / vn to this Philosophre 1572
 The value / of fyue hundred pound I gesse
 And hym bisecheth of his gentillesse
 To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt
 And seyde maister / I dar wel make auaunt 1576
 I failed neuere / of my trouthe as yit
 ffor sikerly / my dette shal be quyt
 Towardes yow / how euere that I fare
 To goon a begged / in my kirtle bare 1580
 But wolde ye vouche sauf / vp on seuretee
 Two yeer or thre / for to respiten me
 Thanne were I wel / for elles moot I selle
 Myn heritage / ther is namoore to telle 1584
This Philosophre / sobrelly answerde
 And seyde thus / whan he thise wordes herde
 Hauē I nat holden couenant vn to thee ?
 ¶ Yes certes / wel and trewely quod he 1588
 ¶ Hastow nat had / thy lady / as thee liketh ?
 ¶ No no quod he / and sorwefully he siketh
 ¶ What was the cause / tel me if thou kan ?
 ¶ Aurelius / his tale anon bigan 1592
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bifoore
 It nedeth nat / to yow reherce it moore
 ¶ He seide / Arueragus of gentillesse
 Hadde leuere dye / in sorwe / and in distresse 1596

Than þat his wyf / were of hir trouthe fals
 The sorwe of Dorigen / he tolde hym als
 How looth hire was / to been a wikked wyf
 And þat she leuere had lost that day hir lyf 1600
 And þat hir trouthe / she swoor thurgh Innocence
 She neuere erst hadde herd speke of Apparence
 That made me han of hire so greet pitee
 And right as frely / as he sente hire me 1604
 As frely / sente I hire to hym ageyn
 This al and som / ther is namoore to seyn
 ¶ This Philosophre answerde / leue brother
 Euerich of yow / dide gentilly til oother 1608
 Thou art a Squier / and he is a knyght
 But god forbede / for his blisful myght
 But if a clerk / koude doon a gentil dede
 As wel as any of yow / it is no drede 1612
 ¶ Sire / I releesse thee / thy thousand pound [leaf 137]
 As thou right now / were copen out of the ground
 Ne neuere er now / ne haddeest knowen me
 ffor sire / I wol nat taken a peny of thee 1616
 ffor al my craft ne noght for my trauaille
 Thou hast ypayed wel / for my vitaille
 It is ynogh / and farewel haue good day
 And took his hors / and forth he goth his way 1620
Lordynges / this question thanne wolde I aske now
 Which was the mooste fre as thynketh yow
 Now telleth me / er that ye ferther wende
 I kan namoore / my tale is at an ende 1624
 ¶ Heere is ended the ffrankeleyns tale

[Note to l. 1364, see l. 1368, p. 518.]

¶ 30^o Atheniensium tiranni cum Phidonem necassent/ in con-
 uuiuo filias eius virgines ad se venire iusserunt & scortorum more
 nudari / ac super pauimenta patris sanguine cruentatas in pudicis
 gestibus ludere ¶ que paulisper dissimulato dolore cum timulentos
 conuiuias cernerent quasi ad requisita nature egredientes inuicem
 se complexu precipitauerunt in puteum ut virginitatem morte ser-
 uarent/ [MS, leaf 133.]

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Heere folweth / the Phisiciens tale [on leaf 137]

Ther was / as telleth Titus Liuius
 A knyght that was called Virginius
 ffulfild / of honour / and of worthynesse
 And strong of freendes / and of greet richesse 4
 ¶ This knyght a doghter hadde by his wyf / [Painting of
the Physician]
 No children hadde he mo in al his lyf
 ffair was this mayde / in excellent beautes
 Abouen every wight that man may see 8
 ffor Nature / hath with souereyn diligence
 Yformed hire / in so greet excellence
 As though she wolde seyn / lo I Nature
 Thus kan I forme / and peynte a creature 12
 Whan that me list who kan me countrefete
 Pigmalion nought / though he ay forge and bete ¶ Quere in Metha-
morphosius
 Or graue / or peynte / for I dar wel seyn
 Apelles Zanzis / sholde werche in veyn ¶ Apelles fecit mira-
bile opus in tumulo
Darii / Vide in Alex-
andro libro .i. de
Zenze in libro Tullij.
 Outher to graue / or peynte / or forge / or bete
 If they presumed / me to countrefete
 ffor he that is the formere principal
 Hath makid me / his vicaire general 20
 To forme and peynten erthely creaturis
 Right as me list and ech thyng in my cure is
 Vnder the Moone / þat may wane and waxe
 And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe 24

My lord and I / been ful of oon accord
 I made hire / to the worshiþe of my lord
 So do I / alle myne othere creatures
 What colour that they han / or what figures 28
 Thus semeth me / that Nature wolde seye [leaf 137, back]
 ¶ This mayde of Age .xij. yeer was and tweye
 In which þat Nature / hadde swich delit
 ffor right as she kan peynte a lillie whit 32
 And reed a Rose / right with swich peynture
 She peynted hath this noble creature
 Er she were born / vp-on hir lymes fre
 Where as by right / swiche colours sholde be 36
 And Phebus dyed hath / hire treses grete
 Lyk to the stremes / of his burned heete
 And if þat excellent was hire beautee
 A thousand foolþ / moore vertuous was she 40
 In hire / ne lakked no condicion
 That is to preyse / as by discrecion
 As wel in goost as body / chast was she
 ffor which / she floured in virginitee 44
 With alle humylitee / and Abstinence
 With alle attemperaunce and pacience
 With mesure eek / of beryng and array
 Discreet she was / in answeyng alway 48
 Though she were wise Pallas dar I seyn
 Hir facound eek / ful wommanly a pleyn
 No countrefeted termes / hadde she
 To seme wys / but after hir degree 52
 She spak / and alle hire wordes moore and lesse
 Sownyng in vertu / and in gentillesse
 Shamefast she was / [in] maydens shamefastnesse
 Constant in herte / and euere in bisynesse 56
 To dryue hire / out of ydel slogardye
 Bacus hadde of hire mouth / right no maistrie
 ffor wyn and youthe / dooth Venus encesse
 As man in fyr / wol wasten oille or greesse 60

And of hir owene vertu / vnconstreyned	
She hath ful ofte tyme syk hire feyned	
ffor that she wolde fleen the compaignye	
Where likly was / to treten of folye	64
As is at feestes / reuels / and at daunces	
That been / occasions of daliaunces	
Swich thyng / maken children for to be	
To soone rype and boold / as men may se	68
Which is ful perilous / and hath been yooore	
ffor al to soone / may they lerne loore	
Of booldnesse / whan she woxen is a wyf	
¶ And ye maistresses / in youre olde lyf	72
That lordes doghtres / han in gouernañce	
Ne taketh of my wordes no displesañce	
Thenketh / that ye been set in gouernynge	
Of lordes doghtres / oonly for two thynges	76
Outher / for ye han kept youre honestee	[leaf 138]
Or elles / ye han falle in freletee	
And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce	
And han forsaken / fully swich meschaunce	80
ffor eueremo / therfore for Cristes sake	
To teche hem vertu / looke þat ye ne slake	
¶ A theef of venyson / that hath forlaft	
His likerousnesse / and al his olde craft	84
Kan kepe a florest best of any man	
Now kepeth wel / for if ye wolde ye kan	
Looke wel / þat ye / vn-to no vice assente	
Lest ye be dampned / for youre wikke entente	88
ffor who so dooth / a traitour is certeyn	
And taketh kepe / of that þat I shal seyn	
Of alle tresons / souereyn pestilence	Nota
Is / whan a wight bitrayseth Innocence	92
¶ Ye fadres and ye moodres / eek also	
Though ye han children / be it oon or two	
Youre is the charge / of al hir surueiañce	
Whil þat they been / vnder youre gouernañce	96

Beth war / if by ensample / of youre lyuyng
 Or by youre necligence / in chastisyng
 That they perisse / for I dar wel seye
 If þat they doon / ye shul it deere abeye 100
 Vnder a shepherde / softe and necligent
 The wolf / hath many a sheepe and lamb to-rent
 [.
 no gap in the MS.] 104
This mayde / of which I wol this tale expresse
 So kepte hir self hir neded no maistresse
 ffor in hir lyuyng maydens myghten rede
 As in a book/ euery good word or dede 108
 That longeth to a mayden vertuous
 She was so prudent and so bounteuous
 ffor which / the fame / out sprong on euery syde
 Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde 112
 That thurgh that land / they preised hire echone
 That loued vertu / saue Enuye allone
 That sory is / of oother mennes wele ¶ Augustinus
 And glad is of his sorwe / and his vnheele 116
 The doctour / maketh this descripcioun
 This mayde vp-on a day / wente in the toun
 Toward a temple / with hire mooder deere
 As is / of yonge maydens the manere 120
 ¶ Now was ther thanne / a Iustice in that toun
 That gouernour was / of that Regioun
 And so bifel / this Iuge / hise eyen caste
 Vp-on this mayde / auysynge hym ful faste 124
 As she cam forby / ther as this Iuge stood
 Anon / his herte chaunged and his mood
 So was he caught with beautee of this mayde [leaf 138, back]
 And to hym self / ful pryuely he sayde 128
 This mayde / shal be myn / for any man
 ¶ Anon the feend / in-to his herte ran
 And taughte hym sodeynly / þat he by slyghite
 The mayden / to his purpos wyne myghite 132

ffor certes by no force / ne by no meede
 Hym thoughte / he was nat' able for to speede
 ffor she was strong' of freendes / and eek she
 Confermed was / in swich souerayn bountee 136
 That wel he wiste / he mygh'te hire neuere wynne
 As for to maken hire / with hir body synne
 ffor which / by greet deliberacioun
 He sente after a cherl / was in the toun 140
 Which þat he knew / for subtil and for boold
 This Iuge / vn-to this cherl / his tale hath toold
 In secree wise / and made hym to ensure
 He sholde telle it' to no creature 144
 And if he dide / he sholde lese his heed
 Whan þat assented was / this cursed reed
 Glad was this Iuge / and maked him greet cheere
 And yaf hym yiftes / preciouise and deere 148
 ¶ Whan shapen was / al hire conspiracie
 ffro point to point' how þat his lecherie
 Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly
 As ye / shul heere it after openly 152
 Hoom gooth the cherl / þat high'te Claudius
 This false Iuge / that high'te Apius
 So was his name / for this is no fable
 But knowen / for historial thyng notable 156
 The sentence of it' sooth is out of doute
 This false Iuge / gooth now faste aboute
 To hasten his delit' al that he may
 And so bifel / soone after on a day 160
 This false Iuge / as telleth vs the storie
 As he was wont' sat in his Consistorie
 And yaf his doomes / vp-on sondry cas
 This false cherl / cam forth / a ful greet pas 164
 And seyde lord / if þat it be youre wille
 As dooth me right / vp-on this pitous bille
 In which I pleyne / vp-on Virginius
 And if þat he wol seyn / it is nat thus 168

I wol it preeue / and fynde good witesse
 That sooth is / that my bille wol expresse
 ¶ The Iuge answerde / of this in his absence
 I may nat yeue / diffyny[ty]ue sentence 172
 Lat do hym calle / and I wol gladly heere
 Thou shalt haue al right^{andire} and no wrong^{his} heere
 ¶ Virginius / cam to wite the Iuges wille [leaf 130]
 And right anon / was rad this cursed bille 176
 The sentence of it / was as ye shul heere
 ¶ To yow my lord / sire Apius so deere
 Sheweth youre poure seruant Claudius 180
 How that a knyght / called Virginius
 Agayns the lawe / agayn al equitee
 Holdeth expres / agayn the wyl of me
 My seruant. which þat is my thral by right^{andire}
 Which fro myn hous / was stole vp-on a nyght^{his} 184
 Whil þat she was ful yong^{andire} this wol I preeue
 By witesse lord / so þat it nat yow greue
 She nys his doghter nat^{andire} what so he seye
 Wherefore / to yow / my lord the Iuge I preye 188
 yeld me my thral / if þat it be youre wille
 Lo / this was / al the sentence of his bille
 ¶ Virginius / gan vp-on the cherl biholde
 But hastily / er he his tale tolde 192
 And wolde haue preeued it^{andire} as sholde a knyght^{his}
 And eek^{andire} by witnessyng^{his} of many a wight^{his}
 That it was fals / that seyde his Aduersarie
 This cursed Iuge / wolde no thyng tarie 196
 Ne heere a word moore of Virginius
 But yaf his Iuggement^{andire} and seyde thus
 ¶ I deeme anon / this cherl his seruant haue
 Thou shalt no lenger / in thyn hous hir saue 200
 Go bryng hire forth / and put hire in oure wardle
 The cherl shal haue his thral / this I awarde
 ¶ And whan this worthy knyght^{andire} Virginius
 Thurgh sentence / of this Iustice Apius 204

Moste by force / his deere doghter yeuen
 Vn-to the Iuge / in lecherie to lyuen
 He gooth hym hoom / and sette him in his halle
 And leet anon / his deere doghter calle 208
 And with a face deed / as asshen colde
 Vpon hir humble face / he gan biholde
 With fadres pitee / stikyng thurgh his herte
 Al wolde he / from his purpos nat conuerte 212
Doghter quod he / Virginia / by thy name
 Ther been two weyes / outhere deeth or shame
 That thou most / suffre / allas þat I was bore
 ffor neuere / thou deseruedest wherfore 216
 To dyen / with a swerd / or with a knyf
 O deere doghter / endere of my lyf
 Which I haue fostred vp / with swich plesance
 That thou were neuere / out of my remembraunce 220
 O doghter / which þat art my laste wo
 And in my lyf my laste ioye also
 O gemme o Chastitee in pacience [leaf 139, back]
 Take thou thy deeth / for this is my sentence 224
 ffor loue and nat for hate / thou most be deed
 My pitous hand / moot smyten of thyn heed
 Allas / that euere Apius the say
 Thus hath he falsly / Iugged the to day 228
 And tolde hire al the cas / as ye bifore
 Han herf / nat nedeth for to telle it moore
 ¶ O mercy deere fader / quod this mayde
 And with that word / she both hir Armes layde 232
 About his nekke / as she was wont to do
 The teeris / bruste out of hir eyen two
 And seyde / goode fader shal I dye
 Is ther no grace / is ther no remedye 236
 ¶ No certes / deere doghter myn quod he
 ¶ Thanne yif me leyser / fader myn quod she
 My deeth for to compleyne / a litel space
 ffor pardee Iepte yaf his doghter grace ¶ *Indicium capituli .xj.* 240

ffor to compleyne / er he hir slow allas || *fruit illo tempore*
lepte Galaandes
 And god it woot no thyng was hir trespas
 But for she ran / hir fader for to see
 To welcome hym / with greet solempnitee 244
 And with that word / she fil aswowne anon
 And after/ whan hir swownyng is agon
 She riseth vp / and to hir fader sayde
 Blissed be god / that I shal dye a mayde 248
 Yif me my deeth / er that I haue a shame
 Dooth with youre child / youre wyl a goddes name
 ¶ And with that word / she preyed hym ful ofte
 That with his swerd / he wolde smyte softe 252
 And with that word / aswowne doun she fil
 Hir fader / with ful sorweful herte and wil
 Hir heed of smoot and by the tope it hente
 And to the Iuge / he gan it to presente 256
 As he sat yet in doom in Consistorie
 And whan the Iuge it saugh / as seith the storie
 He bad to take hym / and anchange hym faste
 But right anon / a thousand peple in thraste 260
 To saue the knyght for routhe and for pitee
 ffor knowen was / the false Iniquitee
 The peple anon / hath suspect of this thyng
 By manere / of the cherles chalangyng 264
 That it was / by the assent of Apius
 They wisten wel / that he was lecherus
 ffor which / vn-to this Apius they gon
 And caste hym in a prison right anon 268
 Ther as he slow hym self and Claudius
 That seruant was / vn-to this Apius
 And demed / for to hange vpon a tree [leaf 140]
 But that Virginius / of his pitee 272
 So preyde for hym / that he was exiled
 And elles certes / he had been bigyled
 The remenant were anhangd moore and lesse
 That were consentant of this cursednesse 276

Heere men may seen / how synne hath his merite
 Beth war / for no man woot whom god wol smyte
 In no degree / ne in which manere wyse
 The worm of conscience / may agryse 280
 Of wikked lyf though it so pryuee be
 That no man / woot ther-of but god and he
 ffor be he lewed man / or ellis lered
 He noot how soone / þat he shal been afered 284
 Therfore I rede yow / this conseil take
 fforsaketh synne / er synne yow forsake

¶ Heere endeth / the Phisiciens tale 𐀚

¶ The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien and
the Pardoner 𐀚

Ovre Hoost gan to swere / as he were wood
 Harrow quod he / by nayles and by blood 288
 This was a fals cherl and a fals Iustise
 As shameful deeth / as herte may deuyse
 Come to thise false Iuges / and hire Aduocatz
 Algate / this sely mayde / is slayn alas 292
 Allas / to deere boughte she beautes
 Wherefore I seye / al day / as men may see
 That yiftes of ffortune and of Nature
 Been cause of deeth / to many a creature 296
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 Of bothe yiftes / that I speke of now
 Men han ful ofte / moore for harm than prow 300
 ¶ But trewely / myn owene maister deere
 This is / a pitous tale for to heere
 But nathelees / passe ouer / is no fors
 I pray to god / so saue thy gentil cors 304
 And eek / thyne vrynals / and thy Iurdones
 Thyn ypocras / and eek thy Galiones
 And euery boyste / ful of thy letuarie
 God blesse hem / and oure lady Seint Marie 308
 So moot I theen / thou art a propre man
 And lyk a prelat by Seint Ronyan
 Seyde I nat wel / I kan nat speke in terme
 But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to erme 312
 That I almoost / haue caught a Cardynacle [leaf 149, back]
 By corpus bones / but I haue triacle
 Or elles a draughte / of moyste and corny Ale
 Or but I heere anon / a myrie tale 316

Myn herte is lost for pitee of this mayde
 Thou beel amy / thou Pardoner he sayde
 Telle vs som myrthe / or Iapes right anon
 ¶ It shal be doon quod he / by Seint Ronyon 320
 But first quod he / heere at this Ale stake
 I wol bothe drynke / and eten of a Cake
 ¶ And right anon / the gentils gonne to crye
 Nay / lat hym telle vs of no ribaudye 324
 Telle vs som moral thyng þat we may leere
 Som wit and thanne wol we gladly heere
 ¶ I graunte ywis quod he / but I moot thynke
 Vp-on som honeste thyng while þat I drynke 328

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale [on leaf 140, back]

¶ *Radix malorum est Cupiditas* Ad Thimotheum .6º

LOrdynges quod he / in chirches / whan I preche
 I payne me / to han an hauteyn speche
 And rynges it out as round as gooth a belle
 ffor I kan / al by rote that I telle 332

My theme is alwey oon / and euere was

Radix malorum est Cupiditas

First I pronounce / whennes þat I come
 And thanne my bulles / shewe I alle *and* some 336

Oure lige lordes seel / on my patente

That shewe I first my body to warente

That no man be so boold / ne preest ne clerk

Me to destourbe / of Cristes hooly werk 340

And after that thanne telle I forth my tales

¹ Bulles of popes ¹ and of Cardynales [¹—¹ nearly scratched out of the MS]

Of Patriarkes / and bishoppes I shewe

And in latyn / I speke a wordes fewe 344

To saffron with my predicaciō

And for to stire hem / to deuociō

Thanne shewe I forth / my longe cristal stones

Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones 348

Relikes been they / as wenen they echoon

Thanne haue [I] in latoñ a sholder boon

Which that was / of an hooly Iewes sheepe

Goode men I seye / taak of my wordes keepe 352

If that this boon / be wasshe in any welle [leaf 141]

If Cow / or Calf or Sheepe / or Oxe swelle

That any worm hath ete / or worm ystonge

Taak water of that welle / and wassh his tonge 356

And it is hool anon / and forthermoor
 Of pokkes / and of scabbe / and euery soor
 Shal euery sheepe be hool / þat of this welle
 Drynketh a draughte / taak kepe eek what I telle 360
 ¶ If that the goode man / that the beestes oweth
 Wol euery wyke / er that the Cok hym croweth
 fastynge drinke / of this welle a draughte
 As thilke hooly Iew / oure eldres taughte 364
 Hise beestes and his stoor shal multiplie
 ¶ And sire / also / it heeleth Ialousie
 ffor though a man / be falle in Ialous rage
 Lat maken / with this water his potage 368
 And neuere shal he moore / his wyf mystriste
 Though he the soothe / of hir defaute wiste
 Al had she / taken preestes / two or thre
 ¶ Heere is a Miteyn eek / that ye may se 372
 He þat his hand wol putte in this Mitayn
 He shal haue / multipliynge of his grayn
 Whan he hath sowen / be it whete or Otes
 So þat he offre / pens / or elles grotes 376
 ¶ Goode men and wommen / o thyng warne I yow
 If any wight / be in this chirche now
 That hath doon synne horrible þat he
 Dar nat for shame / of it yshryuen be 380
 Or any womman / be she yong or old
 That hath ymaked / hir housbonde Cokewold
 Swich folk shal haue no power ne no grace
 To offren / to my relikes in this place 384
 And who so fyndeth hym / out of swich fame
 They wol come vp / and offre on goddes name
 And I assoille hem / by the Auctoritee
 Which that by bulle / ygraunted was to me 388
 ¶ By this gaude / haue I wonne / yeer by yeer
 An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner
 I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet
 And whan the lewed peple / is doun yset 392

I preche so / as ye han herd bifoore
 And telle / an hundred false lapes moore
 Thanne peyne I me / to strecche forth the nekke
 And Est *and* West' vp-on the peple I bekke 396
 As dooth a dowue / sittynge / on a berne
 Myne handes and my tonge goon so yerne
 That it is ioye / to se my bisynesse
 Of Auarice / and of swich cursednesse 400
 Is al my prechyng' for to make hem free [leaf 141, back]
 To yeuen hir pens / and namely vn-to me
 ffor myn entente / is nat but for to wynne
 And no thyng' for correccioñ of synne 404
 I rekke neuere / whan they been beryed
 Though þat hir soules / goon a blakeberyed
 ffor certes / many a predicacioñ
 Comth ofte tyme / of yuel entencioñ 408
 Som for plesance of folk/ and flaterye
 To been anaunced / by ypocrisye
 And som for veyne glorie / and som for hate
 ffor whan / I dar noon oother weyes debate 412
 Thanne wol I styng'e hym / with my tonge smerte
 In prechyng / so that he shal nat asterte
 To been defamed falsly / if that he 9
 Hath trespassed / to my bretheren / or to me 416
 ffor though I telle noght / his propre name
 Men shal wel knowe / that it is the same
 By signes / and by othere circumstances
 Thus quyte I folk' that doon vs displesances 420
 Thus spitte I out my venym / vnder hewe
 Of hoolynesse / to semen hooly and trewe
 ¶ But shortly myn entente I wol deuyse
 I preche of no thyng' but for coueityse 424
 Therefore / my theme is yet' and euere was
 Radix malorum est Cupiditas
 Thus kan I preche / agayn that same vice
 Which þat I vse / and that is Auarice 428

But though my self/ be gilty in that synne
 Yet kan I maken / oother folk' to twynne
 ffrom Auarice / and soore to repente
 But that is nat/ my principal entente 432
 I preche no thyng' but for coueitise
 Of this mateere / it ogh̃te ynogh̃ suffice
 ¶ Thanne telle I hem / ensamples many oon
 Of olde stories / longe tyme agoon 436
 ffor lewed peple / louen tales olde
 Swiche thynges / kan they wel reporte *and* holde
 What trowe ye / the whiles I may preche
 And wyne / gold and siluer / for I teche 440
 That I wol lyue in pouerte wilfully
 Nay nay / I thoghte it neuere trewely
 ffor I wol preche / and begge in sondry landes
 I wol nat' do no labour/ with myne handes 444
 Ne make baskettes / and lyue therby
 By cause / I wol nat' beggen ydelly
 I wol noon / of the Apostles countrefete
 I wol haue moneie / wolle chese and whete 448
 Al were it yeuen / of the pouereste page [leaf 142r]
 Or of the pouereste wydwe / in a village
 Al sholde hir children sterue / for famyne
 Nay / I wol drynke / licour of the vyne 452
 And haue a ioly wenche / in euery toun
 But herkneth lordynges in conclusioun
 ¶ Your'e likyng is / that I shal telle a tale
 Now / haue I dronke a draughte of corny ale 456
 By god / I hope / I shal yow telle a thyng'
 That shal by reson / been at youre likyng'
 ffor though my self' be a ful vicious man
 A moral tale / yet I yow telle kan 460
 Which I am wont to preche / for to wyne
 Now hoold youre pees / my tale I wol bigynne

¶ Heere bigynneth the Pardoners tale
[on leaf 142]

IN ffaundres whilom was a compaignye
 Of yonge folk/ that haunteden folye 464
 As Riot^r hasard / stywes / and Taucernes
 Where / as / with harpes / lutes and Gyternes
 They daunce / and pleyen at dees / bothe day and nyght^r
 And eten also / and drynken ouer hir myght / 468
 Thurgh which / they doon the deuel sacrifice
 With-Inne that deueles temple in cursed wise
 By superfluytee abhomynable
 Hir othes / been so grete and so dampnable 472
 That it is grisly / for to heere hem swere
 Oure blissed lordes body / they to-tere
 Hem thoughte / þat Iewes / rente hym noght ynough
 And ech of hem / at otheres synne lough 476
 And right anon / thanne comen Tombesteres
 ffetys and smale / and yonge ffrutesteres
 Syngeres with harpes / Baudes / wafereres
 Whiche been / the verray deueles Officeres 480
 To kyndle and blowe / the fyr of lecherye
 That is annexed vn-to glotonye
 The hooly writ/ take I to my witnesse
 That luxurie / is in wyn and dronkenesse 484
Lo how þat dronken Looth vnkyndely
 Lay by hise doghtres two vnwityngly
 So dronke he was / he nyste what he wroghte
 ¶ Herodes / who so / wel the stories soghte 488

[Painting of the
Pardoner on
Horseback:]

[.
 no spurious lines in this MS.]

Whan he of wyn / was repleet at his feeste 489
 Right at his owene table / he yaf his heeste
 To sleen the Baptist Iohn / ful giltelees
 ¶ Senec seith a good word doutelees ¶ Seneca 492
 He seith / he kan no difference fynde [leaf 142, back]
 Bitwix a man / that is out of his mynde
 And a man / which that is dronkelewe
 But that woodnesse / fallen in a shrewe 496
 Perseuereth lenger / than dooth dronkenesse
 O glotonye / ful of cursednesse
 O cause first of oure confusioñ
 O original / of oure dampnacioñ 500
 Til Crist / hadde boght vs / with his blood agayn
 Lo / how deere / shortly for to sayn
 Aboght was / thilke cursed vileynye
 Corrupt was al this world for glotonye 504
 ¶ Adam oure fader / and his wyf also
 ffro Paradys / to labour and to wo
 Were dryuen for that vice / it is no drede 507
 ffor whil þat Adam fasted / as I rede ¶ Ieronimus contra Iou-
 He was in Paradys / and whan þat he 9 nianum || Quamdiu iesu-
 Eet of the fruyt / deffended on the tree naut Adam / in Paradiso
 Anon he was out cast to wo and peyne fuit / comedit & electus est /
 O glotonye / on thee wel oghte vs pleyne statim duxit vxorem
 O wiste a man / how manye maladyes
 ffolwen of excesse / and of glotonyes
 He wolde been / the moore mesurable
 Of his diete / sittinge at his table 516
 Allas / the shorte throte / the tendre mouth
 Maketh þat Est and West and North and South
 In Erthe / in Eir / in water / man to swynke
 To gete a glotoñ / deyntee mete and drynke 520
 Of this matiere / o Paul wel kanstow trete
 Mete vn-to wombe / and wombe eek vn-to mete ¶ Ecce ventri
 Shal god destroyen bothe / as Paulus seith deus autem & hunc
 & illam destruet /
 Allas / a foul thyng is it / by my feith 524

To seye this word / and fouler is the dede
 Whan man so drynketh / of the white and rede
 That of his throte / he maketh his pryuee
 Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee 528
 ¶ The Apostel wepyng^t seith ful pitously ¶ Ad Philipenses
capitulo .3o.
 Ther walken manye / of whiche yow toold haue I
 I seye it now wepyng^t with pitous voye
 Ther been enemyes of Cristes croys 532
 Of whiche the ende is deeth / wombe is hir god
 O wombe / o. bely / o. styngyng Cod^r
 ffulfilled of donge / and of corrupcioun
 At either ende of thee / foul is the soun 536
 How greet labour / and cost^t is thee to fynde
 Thise Cookes / how they stampe / and streyne and grynde
 And turnen substaunce in-to Accident^t
 To fulfillen / al thy likerous talent^t 540
 Out of the harde bones knocke they [leaf 145]
 The mary / for they caste noght a-wey
 That may go thurgh the golet^t softe and swoote
 Of spicerie / of leef^t / and bark^t and roote 544
 Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit^t
 To make hym yet^t a newer appetit^t
 But *certes* / he that haunteth swiche delices ¶ Qui autem in de-
licijs est viuens
mortuus est
 Is deed / whil þat he lyueth in tho vices 548
 ¶ A lecherous thyng^t is wyn and dronkenesse ¶ luxuriosa res
vinum / et con-
tumeliosa ebrietas
 Is ful of stryuyng^t and of wrecchednesse
 O dronke man / disfigured is thy face
 Sour is thy breeth / foul artow to embrace 552
 And thurgh thy dronke nose / semeth the soun
 As though thou seydest^t ay Sampson Sampson
 And yet god woot^t Sampson drank neuere no wyn
 Thou fallest / as it were a styked swyn 556
 Thy tonge is lost / and al thyn honeste cure
 ffor dronkenesse / is verray sepulture
 Of mannes wit^t and his discrecion
 In whom þat drynke hath dominacion 560

He kan no conseil kepe / it is no drede
 Now kepe yow / fro the white and fro the rede
 And namely / fro the white wyn of lepe
 That is to selle / in ffysshstrete / or in Chepe 564
 This wyn of Spaigne / crepeth subtilly
 In othere wynes / growynge faste by
 Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee
 That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre 568
 And weneth / that he be at hoom in Chepe
 He is in Spaigne / right at the toun of lepe
 Nat at the Rochele / ne at Burdeux toun
 And thanne wol he seye / Sampson Sampson 572
 ¶ But herkneþ lordes / o word I yow preye
 That alle the souereyn Actes dar I seye
 Of victories / in the olde testament
 Thurgh verray god / þat is omnipotent 576
 Were doon in Abstinence / and in preyere
 Looketh the Bible / and ther ye may it leere
 ¶ Looke Attila the grete Conquerour
 Deyde in his sleepe / with shame and dishonour 580
 Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenesse
 A Capitayn / sholde lyue in sobrenesse
 And ouer al this / auyseth yow right wel
 What was comaunded / vn to Lamwel ¶ Noli vinum dare 584
 Nat Samuel / but Lamwel seye I
 Redeth the Bible / and fynde it expresly
 Of wyn yeuyng to hem þat han Iustise
 Namore of this / for it may wel suffise 588
A Nd now I haue spoken of Glotony [leaf 143, back]
 Now wol I yow / deffenden hasardrye ¶ Of Hasardrye
 Hasard / is verray mooder of lesynges ¶ Pollucristi [Ioannis Sari-
 And of deceite / and cursed forswerynges burienis] libro .1. / Mendaciorum & peruriarum mater est Ales.
 Blasphemynge of crist manslaughtre and wast also
 Of catel and of tyme / and forthermo
 It is repreeue / and contrarie of honour
 ffor to ben holde / a commune hasardour 596

And euer the hyer/ he is of estaat
 The moore / is he holden desolaat
 If that a Prynce / vseth hasardrye
 In alle gouernaunce and policye 600
 He is / as by commune opinioñ
 Yholde the lasse / in reputacioñ
 ¶ Stilboñ / that was a wys embassadour
 Was sent to Corynthe / in ful greet honour 604
 ffro Lacidomye / to maken hire Alliaunce
 And whan he cam / hym happed[e] *par* chaunce
 That alle the gretteste / that were of that lond
 Pleyynge atte hasard / he hem fond 608
 ffor which / as soone / as it myghte be
 He stal hym hoom agayn / to his contree
 And seyde / ther wol I nat lese my name
 Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame 612
 Yow for to allie / vn-to none hasardours
 Sendeth / othere wise Embassadours
 ffor by my trouthe / me were leuere dye
 Than I yow sholde / to hasardours allye 616
 ffor ye that been / so glorious in honours
 Shul nat allyen yow / with hasardours
 As by my wyl / ne as by my trettee
 This wise Philosophre / thus seyde hee 620
 ¶ Looke eek that the kyng Demetrius
 The kyng of Parthes as the book seith vs
 Sente him / a paire of dees of gold in scorn
 ffor he hadde vsed / hasard ther-biforn 624
 ffor which / he heeld his glorie / or his renoun
 At no value / or reputacioun
 Lordes may fynden / oother maner pley
 Honeste ynough / to dryne the day away 628
 Now wol I speke / of othes false and grete ¶ Of sweryng & forsweryng
 A word or two / as olde bookes trete
 Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable
 And fals sweryng is yet moore repreuable 632

The heighe god / forbad sweryng^t at al ¶ *Nolite omnino Iurare*
 Witnesse on Mathew / but in special
 Of sweryng^t seith the hooly Ieremye ¶ *Ieremie. 49. ¶. Iurabis in veri-*
 Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othes and nat lye 636
 And swere in doom / and eek in rightwisesse [leaf 144]
 But ydel sweryng^t is a cursednesse
 Bihoold and se / that in the firste table
 Of heighe goddes heestes honorable 640
 Hou / that the seconde heeste / of hym / is this
 Take nat my name / in ydel or amys
 Lo rather he forbedeth swich sweryng^t
 Than homycide / or any cursed thyng^t 644
 I seye / that as by ordre / thus it stondeth
 This knowen / that hise heestes vnderstondeth
 How þat / the seconde heeste of god is that
 And forther ouer / I wol thee telle al plat^t 648
 That vengeance / shal nat parten from his hous
 That of hise othes / is to outrageous
 By goddes precious herte / and by his nayles
 And by the blood of Crist^t that is in Hayles 652
 Seueue is my chaunce / and thyn is cynk^t and treye
 By goddes Armes / if thou falsly pleye
 This daggere / shal thurgh-out thyn herte go
 This fruyt cometh / of the bicched bones two 656
 fforsweryng^t Ire / falsnesse / Homycide
 Now for the loue of Crist^t þat for vs dyde
 Lete youre othes / bothe grete and smale
 But sires / now wol I telle forth my tale 660
THise Riotours thre / of whiche I telle
 Longe erst^t er prime rong^t of any belle
 Were set hem / in a Tauerne to drynke
 And as they sat they herde a belle clynke 664
 Biforn a cors / was caried / to his graue
 That oon of hem / gan callen to his knaue
 Go bet quod he / and axe redily
 What cors is this / þat passeth heer forby 668

And looke / þat thou reporte his name weel
 ¶ Sire quod this boy / it nedeth neueradeel
 It was me toold / er ye cam heer two houres
 He was pardee / an old felawe of youre 672
 And sodeynly / he was yslayn to-nyght
 ffor-dronke / as he sat on his bench vpright
 Ther cam a priuce theef / men clepeth deeth
 That in this contree / al the peple sleeth 676
 And with his spere / he smoot his herte atwo
 And wente his wey / with-outen wordes mo
 He hath / a thousand slayn this pestilence
 And maister / er ye come in his presence 680
 Me thynketh / that it were necessarie
 ffor to be war / of swich an Aduersarie
 Beth redy / for to meete hym eueremoore
 Thus taughte me my dame / I sey namoore 684
 By seinte Marie seyde this Tauerner [leaf 144, back]
 The child seith sooth / for he hath slayn this yeer
 Henne ouer a Mile / with-Inne a greet village
 Bothe man and womman / child and hyne / and page
 I trowe / his habitacion be there 689
 To been auysed / greet wysdom it were
 Er that he dide a man / a dishonour
 ¶ Ye goddes Armes / quod this Riotour 692
 Is it swich peril / with hym for to meete?
 I shal hym seke / by wey and eek by strete
 I make auow / to goddes digne bones
 Herkneþ felawes / we thre been al ones 696
 Lat ech of vs / holde vp his hand til oother
 And ech of vs / bicomem otheres brother
 And we wol sleen / this false traytour deeth
 He shal be slayn / which þat so manye sleeth 700
 By goddes dignitee / er it be nyght/
 ¶ Togidres han thise thre / hir trouthes plight
 To lyue and dyen / ech of hem for oother
 As though he were / his owene yborn brother 704

And vp they stirte / and dronken in this rage
 And forth they goon / towards that village
 Of which the Tauerner/ hadde spoke biforn
 And many a grisly ooth / thanne han they sworn 708
 And Cristes blessed body / they to-rente
 Deeth shal be deed / if that they may hym hente
 ¶ Whan they han goon / nat fully half a Mile
 Right as they wolde / han troden ouer a stile 712
 An oold man and a poure / with hem mette
 This olde man / ful mekely hem grette
 And seyde thus / now lordes / god yow see
 ¶ The proudeste / of thise Riotours three 716
 Answerde agayn / what carl with sory grace
 Why artow / al forwrapped saue thy face?
 Why lyuestow so longe / in so greet age?
 ¶ This olde man / gan looke in his visage 720
 And seyde thus / for I ne kan nat fynde
 A man / though þat I walked in to ynde
 Neither in Citee / nor in no Village
 That wolde chaunge / his youthe for myn Age 724
 And therfore / moot I han myn Age stille
 As longe tyme / as it is goddes wille
 ¶ Ne deeth allas / ne wol nat han my lyf
 Thus walke I / lyk' a resteles kaityf 728
 And on the ground / which is my moodres gate
 I knokke with my staf / bothe erly and late
 And seye / leeue mooder/ leet me In
 Lo how I vanysshe / flessch and blood and skyn 732
 Allas / whan shul / my bones been at reste (leaf 145)
 Mooder / with yow / wolde I chaunge my cheste
 That in my chambre / longe tyme hath be
 Ye for an heyre clowt to wrappe me 736
 But yet to me / she wol nat do that grace
 ffor which / ful pale / and welked is my face
 ¶ But sires to yow / it is no curteisye
 To spoken / to an old man vileynye 740

But he trespasse / in word / or elles in dede
 In hooly writ ye may your self wel rede
 Agayns an oold man / hoor vpon his heed ¶ coram canuto
capite consurge
744
 Ye sholde arise / wherefore I yeue yow reed
 Ne dooth vn-to an oold man / noon harm now
 Namore than þat ye wolde / men did to yow
 In age / if that ye so longe abyde
 And god be with yow / where ye go or ryde 748
 I moote go thider / as I haue to go
 ¶ Nay olde cherl / by god thou shalt nat so
 Seyde this oother hasardour anon
 Thou partest nat so lightly / by Seint Iohn 752
 Thou spak' right/ now / of thilke traytour deeth
 That in this contree / alle oure freendes sleeth
 Haue heer my trouthe / as thou art his espye
 Telle where he is / or thou shalt it abyde 756
 By god / and by the hooly sacrement
 ffor soothly / thou art oon of his assent
 To sleen vs yonge folk / thou false theef
 ¶ Now sires quod he / if þat ye be so leef 760
 To fynde deeth / turne vp this croked wey
 ffor in that groue / I lafte hym by my fey
 Vnder a tree / and there he wole abyde
 Noght for youre boost' he wole him no thyng hyde 764
 Se ye that ook' right there ye shal hym fynde
 God saue yow þat boghte agayn mankynde
 And yow amende / thus seyde this olde man
 And euerich / of thise Riotours ran 768
 Til he cam to that tree / and ther they founde
 Of floryns fyne of gold ycoyned rounde
 Wel ny an .viij. bussiels / as hem thoughte
 No lenger thanne / after deeth they soughte 772
 But ech of hem / so glad was of that sighte
 ffor þat the floryns / been so faire and brighte
 That doun they sette hem / by this precious hoor
 The worste of hem / he spak the firste word 776

¶ Bretheren quod he / taak kepe what I seye
 My wit is greet though þat I bourde and pleye
 This tresor / hath ffortune vn-to vs yeuen
 In myrthe and Ioliftee / oure lyf to lyuen 780
 And lightly as it comth / so wol we spende [leaf 145, back]
 Ey goddes precious dignitee / who wende
 To-day / that we sholde han so fair a grace
 But myghite this gold / be caried fro this place 784
 Hoom to myn hous / or elles vn-to youres
 ffor wel ye woot þat al this gold is oures
 Thanne were we / in heigh felicitée
 But trewely / by daye it may nat bee 788
 Men wolde seyn / þat we were theues stronge
 And for oure owene tresor / doon vs honge
 This tresor / moste ycaried be by nyghite
 As wisely / and as slyly / as it myghite 792
 Wherfore I rede / þat Cut among vs alle
 Be drawe / and lat se / wher the Cut wol falle
 And he þat hath the Cut with herte blithe
 Shal renne to towne / and that ful swithe 796
 And brynge vs breed and wyn / ful priuely
 And two of vs / shul kepen subtilly
 This tresor wel / and if he wol nat tarie
 Whan it is nyght we wol this tresor carie 800
 By oon assent / where as vs thynketh best
 That oon of hem / the Cut broghite in his fest
 And bad hym drawe / and looke where it wol falle
 And it fil / on the yongeste of hem alle 804
 And forth toward the toun / he wente anon
 And al so soone / as that he was gon
 That oon spak thus / vn-to that oother
 Thou knowest wel / thou art my sworn brother 808
 Thy profit wol I telle thee anon
 Thou woost wel / that oure felawe is agon
 And heere is gold / and that ful greet plentee
 That shal departed been / among vs thre 812

But nathelees / if I kan shape it so
 That it departed were / among vs two
 Hadde I nat doon / a freendes torn to thee?
 ¶ That oother answerde / I noot' hou that may be 816
 He woot' how that the gold is with vs tweye
 Wha[t sha]ll we doon / what shal we to hym seye?
 ¶ Shal it be conseil / seyde the firste shrewe?
 And I shal tellen / in a wordes fewe 820
 What we shal doon / and bryngen it wel aboute
 ¶ I graunte quod that oother / out of doute
 That by my trouthe / I shal thee nat biwreye
 ¶ Now quod the firste / thou woost wel we be tweye 824
 And two of vs / shul strenger be than oon
 Looke whan þat he is set that right anon
 Arys / as though thou woldest with hym pleye
 And I shal / ryue hym / thurgh the sydes tweye 828
 Whil that thou strogelest with hym / as in game [leaf 146]
 And with thy daggere / looke thou do the same
 And thanne / shal al this gold / departed be
 My deere freend / bitwixen me and thee 832
 Thanne may we / bothe oure lustes all fulfille
 And pleye at dees / right at oure owene wille
 And thus / acorded been thise shrewes tweye
 To sleen the thriddle / as ye han herd me seye 836
 ¶ This yongeste / which þat wente vn-to the toun
 fful ofte in herte / he rolleth vp and doun
 The beautee of thise floryns / newe and brighte
 O lord quod he / if so were þat I myghte 840
 Haue al this tresor / to my self allone
 Ther is no man / þat lyueth vnder the trone
 Of god / that sholde lyue so murye as I
 And atte laste / the fecnd oure enemy 844
 Putte in his thought' þat he sholde poyson beye
 With which / he myghte / sleen hise felawes tweye
 ffor why / the fecnd foond hym in swich lyuynge
 That he hadde leue / hem to sorwe brynge 848

ffor this was outrely / his fulle entente
 To sleen hem bothe / and neuere to repente
 And forth he gooth / no lenger wolde he tarie
 Into the toun / vn-to Apothecarie 852
 And preyde hym / þat he hym wolde selle
 Som poyson / þat he myghite hise rattes quelle
 And eek ther was / a polcat in his hawe
 That as he seyde / hise caponis hadde yslawe 856
 And fayn he wolde / wreke hym / if he myghite
 On vermyn / þat destroyed hym by nyghite
 ¶ The Pothecarie answerde / and thou shalt haue
 A thyng that al so god my soule saue 860
 In al this world / ther is no creature
 That eten or dronken hath / of this confiture
 Noght / but the montance of a corn of whete
 That he ne shal / his lif anon forlete 864
 Ye sterue he shal / and that in lasse while
 Than thou wolt goon a paas / nat but A Mile
 This poyson / is so strong and violent
 ¶ This cursed man / hath in his hond yhent 868
 This poyson in a box / and sith he ran
 In-to the nexte strete / vn-to a man
 And borwed hym / large botels thre
 And in the two / his poyson poured he 872
 The thridde he kepte clene / for his owene drynke
 ffor al the nyght / he shoope hym for to swynke
 In carynge of the gold / out of that place
 And whan this Riotour / with sory grace 876
 Hadde filled with wyn / hise grete botels thre [leaf 146, back]
 To hise felawes / agayn repaireth he
 ¶ What nedeth it to sermone of it moore
 ffor right so / as they hadde cast his deeth bifoore 880
 Right so they han hym slayn / and that anon
 And whan þat this was doon / thus spak that oon
 Now lat vs sitte and drynke / and make vs merie
 And afterwarð / we wol his body berie 884

And with that word / it happed hym *par cas*
 To take the botel / ther the poyson was
 And drank' and yaf his felawe drynke also
 ffor which anon / they storuen bothe two 888
 ¶ But certes I suppose / that Auycen
 Wroot neuere in no Canon / ne in no fen
 Mo wonder signes / of empoisonyng'
 Than hadde thise wrecches two / er hir endyng' 892
 Thus ended been / thise homycides two
 And eek' the false empoysonere also
 ¶ O cursed synne / of alle cursednesse ¶ Auctor
 O traytours homycide .o. wikkednesse 896
 O glotonye / luxurie / and hasardrye
 Thou blasphemour of Crist' with vileynye
 And othes grete / of vsage / and of pride
 Allas mankynde / how may it bitide 900
 That to thy creatour / which þat the wroghte
 And with his *precious* herte-blood thee boghte
 Thou art so fals / and so vnkynde allas
 ¶ Now goode men / god foryeue yow youre trespas 904
 And ware yow / fro the synne of Auarice
 Myn hooly pardoñ / may yow alle warice
 So þat ye offre / nobles / or sterlynges
 Or elles siluer broches / spoones / rynges 908
 Boweth youre heed / vnder this hooly bulle
 Com vp ye wyues / offreth of youre wolle
 Your names / I entre heer/ in my rolle anon
 In-to the blisse of heuene / shul ye gon 912
 I yow assoille / by myn heigh power
 Yow þat wol offre / as clene and eek as cleer
 As ye were born / and lo sires thus I preche
 And Ihesu crist' that is oure soules leche 916
 So graunte yow / his pardoñ to receyue
 ffor that is best' I wol yow nat' deceyue
 But sires / o. word / forga't I in my tale
 I haue Relikes / and pardoñ in my male 920

As faire / as any man in Engeland
 Whiche were me yeuen / by the popes¹ hond^[¹ half scratched out of the MS]
 If any of yow / wole of deuocioñ
 Offren / and han myn Absolucioñ 924
 Com forth anon / and kneleth heers adoun^[leaf 147]
 And mekely / receyueþ my pardoun
 Or elles / taketh pardon / as ye wende
 Al newe and fressh / at euery Miles ende 928
 So þat ye offren / alwey newe and newe
 Nobles or pens / whiche þat be goode and trewe
 It is an honour / to euerich that is heer
 That ye mowe haue / a suffisant Pardoneer 932
 Tassoille yow / in contree as ye ryde
 ffor auentures / whiche þat may bityde
 Parauenture / ther may fallen / oon or two
 Doun of his hors / and breke his nekke atwo 936
 Looke which a seuretee / is it to yow alle
 That I am / in youre felaweshipe yfalle
 That may assoille yow / bothe moore and lasse
 Whan þat the soule / shal fro the body passe 940
 I rede / þat oure hoost heere shal bigynne
 ffor he is / moost enveloped in synne
 Com forth sire hoost and offre first anon
 And thou shalt kisse / my Relikes euerychon 944
 Ye for a grote / vnbokele anon thy purs
Nay nay quod he / thanne haue I cristes curs
 Lat be quod he / it shal nat be so theech
 Thou woldest make me / kisse thyn olde breech 948
 And swere / it were a relyk^t of a seint
 Though it were / with thy fundement depeint
 But by the croys / which þat seint Eleyne found² ^[² found in a later hand]
 I wold / I hadde / thy coillons in myn hond 952
 In stide of Relikes / or of seintuarie
 Lat kutte hem of / I wol with thee hem carie
 They shul be shryned / in an hogges toon^t
 ¶ This Pardoner / answerde nat a word 956

So wrooth he was / no word ne wolde he seye
 ¶ Now quod oure hoost I wol no lenger pleye
 With thee / ne with noon oother angry man
 But right anon / the worthy knyght bigan 960
 Whan þat he saugh / þat al the peple lough
 Namooore of this / for it is right ynough
 Sire Pardoner / be glad and myrie of cheere
 And ye sir hoost þat been to me so deere 964
 I prey yow / þat ye kisse the Pardoner
 And Pardoner / I prey thee / drawe thee neer
 And as we diden / lat vs laughē and pleye
 Anon they kiste / and ryden forth hir weye 968

¶ Heere is ended the Pardoners tale 𐝰

GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Heere bigynneth the Shipmannes tale. (A)
[Klun. MS. 1f 147, bk.]

A Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denys,
That riche was / for which men helde hym wys
A wyf he hadde / of excellent beautee
And compaignable / and reuelous was she [*Painting of
the Shipman,
on the left.*]
Which is a thyng that causeth more dispence
Than worth is / al the chiere and reuerence 1196
That men hem doon / at festes and at daunces
Swiche salutaciōns / and contenaunces
Passen / as dooth a shadwe vp on the wal
But wo is hym / that payen moot for al 1200
The sely housbonde / algate he moste paye
He moot vs clothe / and he moot vs arraye
Al for his owene worship richely
In which array / we daunce iolily 1204
And if þat he noght may / *par* aventure
Or ellis / list no swich dispence endure
But thynketh / it is wasted / and ylost
Thanne moot another / payen for oure cost 1208
Or lene vs gold / and that is *perilous*
¶ This noble Marchant heeld a worthy hous
ffor which / he hadde alday so greet repair
ffor his largesse / and for his wyf was fair 1212
That wonder is / but herkneth to my tale
Amonges alle hise gestes / grete and smale
Ther was a Monk a fair man and a book
I trowe of thritty wynter he was ook 1216
That euere in oon / was comynge to that place
This yongo Monk / þat was so fair of face

Aqueynted was so / with the goode man
 Sith that / hir firste knoweliche bigan 1220
 That in his hous / as famulier was he
 As it possible / any freend to be
 ¶ And for as muchel / as this goode man
 And eek this Monk' of which þat I bigan 1224
 Were bothe two / yborn in o village
 The Monk / hym claymeth / as for cosynage
 And he agayn / he seith nat ones nay
 But was as glad ther-of / as fowel of day 1228
 ffor to his herte / it was a greet plesaunce
 Thus been they knyht' with eterne alliaunce
 And ech of hem / gan oother for tassure
 Of bretherhede / whil þat hir lyf may dure 1232
 ¶ ffree was Daun Iohn and namely of dispence [leaf 148]
 As in that hous / and ful of diligence
 To doon plesaunce / and also greet costage
 He noght' forgaht' to yeue the leeste page 1236
 In al the hous / but after hir degree
 He yaf the lord / and sitthe al his meynce
 Whan that he cam / som manere honest thyng'
 ffor which / they were as glad of his comyng' 1240
 As fowel is fayn / whan þat the sonne vp riseth
 Na moore of this as now / for it suffiseth
But so bifel / this Marchant on a day
 Shoop hym / to make redy his array 1244
 Toward / the toun of Brugges for to fare
 To byen there / a porcion of ware
 ffor which / he hath to Parys sent anon
 A Messenger / and preyed hath daun Iohn 1248
 That he sholde come / to Seint Denys to pleye
 With hym and with his wyf / a day or tweye
 Er he to Brugges wente / in alle wise
 ¶ This noble Monk' of which I yow deuyse 1252
 Hath of his Abbot' as hym list licence
 By cause / he was a man / of heigh prudence

And eek an Officer / out for to ryde
 To seen hir graunges / and hire bernys wyde 1256
 And vn-to Seint Denys / he comth anon
 Who was so welcume / as my lord Daun Iohn
 Oure deere cosyn / ful of curteisye
 With hym broghte he a Iubbe of Maluesye 1260
 And eek another / ful of fyn vernage
 And volatyl / as ay was his vsage
 And thus / I lete hem drynke and pleye
 This Marchant and this Monk a day or tweye 1264
 ¶ The thridde day / this Marchant vp ariseth
 And on hise nedes / sadly hym auyseth
 And vp / in to his Countour hous gooth he
 To rekene with hym self / wel may be 1268
 Of thilke yeer / how þat it with hym stood
 And how þat he / despended hadde his good
 And if þat he / encressed were or noon
 Hise bookes / and his bagges many oon 1272
 He leith biforn hym / on his countyngs bord
 fful riche / was his tresor and his hor
 ffur which ful faste / his Countour dore he shette
 And eek he nolde / þat no man sholde hym lette 1276
 Of hise accountes / for the meene tyme
 And thus he sit til it was passed pryne
 ¶ Daun Iohn was rysen / in the morwe also
 And in the gardyn / walketh to and fro 1280
 And hath hise thynges seyde / ful curteisly [leaf 148, back]
 ¶ This goode wyf cam walkynge pryuely
 In to the gardyn / there he walketh softe
 And hym saleweth / as she hath doon ofte 1284
 A mayde child / cam in hire compaignye
 Which as hir list she may gouerne and gye
 ffur yet vnder the yerde was the mayde
 O deere cosyn myn / daun Iohn she sayde 1288
 What eyleth yow / so rathe for to ryse
 ¶ Nece quod he / it oghte ynough suffice

ffyue houres for to slepe / vp on a nyght
 But it were / for an old^d appalled wight 1292
 As been thise wedded men / þat lye and dare
 As in a fourme / sit a very hare
 Were al forstraught / with houndes grete *and* smale
 But deere Nece / why be ye so pale 1296
 I trowe *certes* / that oure goode man
 Hath yow laboured / sith the nyght bigan
 That yow were nede / to resten hastily
 And with that word / he lough ful murily 1300
 And of his owene thought he wax al reed^d
 ¶ This faire wyf gan for to shake hir hee^d
 And seyde thus / ye god woot al quod she
 Nay nay coosyn myn / it stant nat so with me 1304
 ffor by that god / that yaf me soule and lyf/
 In al the Reawme of ffrance / is ther no wyf
 That lasse lust hath / to that sory pley
 ffor I may synge / alas and weylawey 1308
 That I was born / but to no wight quod she
 Dar I nat telle / how that it stant with me
 Wherefore I thynke / out of this land to wende
 Or elles / of my self to make an ende 1312
 So ful am I / of drede / and eek of care
 ¶ This Monk bigan vp on this wyf to stare
 And / seyde / Allas my Nece god forbede
 That ye / for any sorwe / or any drede 1316
 ffordo youre self / but tel me of youre grief^t
 Parauenture / I yow may / in youre meschief^t
 Conseille or helpe / and therfore telleth me
 All youre anoy / for it shal been secree 1320
 ffor on my porthors / I make an ooth
 That neuere in my lyf / for lief ne looth
 Ne shal I / of no conseil yow biwreye
 ¶ The same agayn / to yow quod she I seye 1324
 By god / and by this Porthors I yow swere
 Though men me wolde / al in to pieces tere

Ne shal I neuere / for to goon to helle
 Biwreye a word / of thyng^t þat ye me telle 1328
 Nat for no cosynage / ne alliance [leaf 149]
 But verrailly / for loue and affiance
 Thus been they sworn / and heer vpon they kiste
 And ech of hem / tolde oother what hem liste 1332
 ¶ Cosyn quod she / if þat I hadde a space
 As I haue noon / and namely in this place
 Thanne wolde I telle / a legende of my lyf
 What I haue suffred / sith I was a wyf 1336
 With myn housbonde / al be he of youre kyn
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk^t by god / and by seint Martyn
 He is / na moore cosyn vn-to me
 Than is this lief^t þat hangeth on the tree 1340
 I clepe hym so / by Seint Denys of frañce
 To haue / the moore cause of Aqueyntañce
 Of yow / which I haue loued specially
 Abouen alle wommen sikerly 1344
 This swere I yow / on my profession
 Telleth youre grief / lest þat he come adoun
 And hasteth yow / and gooth youre wey anon
 ¶ My deere loue quod she / o my daun Iohn 1348
 fful lief were me / this conseil for to hyde
 But out it^t moot^t I may namoore abyde
 Myn housbonde / is to me the worste man
 That euere was / sith þat the world bigan 1352
 But sith I am a wyf^t it sit nat me
 To tellen no wight / of oure priuetees
 Neither a bedde / ne in noon oother place
 God shilde / I sholde it tellen for his grace 1356
 A wyf / ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde
 But al honour / as I kan vnderstonde
 Saue vn to yow / thus muche I tellen shal
 As helpe me god / he is noght worth at al 1360
 In no degree / the value of a flye
 But yet^t me greueth moost^t his nygardye

And wel ye woot þat wommen naturelly
 Desiren thynges sixe / as wel as I 1364
 They wolde / that hir housbondes sholde be
 Hardy *and* wise / and riche *and* ther-to free
 And buxom vn to his wyf and fressh abedde
 But by that ilke lord / that for vs bledde 1368
 ffor his honour / my self for to arraye
 A sonday next I moste nedes paye
 An hundred frankes / or ellis I am lorn
 Yet were me leuere / that I were vnborn 1372
 Than me were doon / a sclandre or vileynye
 And if myn housbonde / eek it myghte espye
 I nere but lost and therfore I yow preye
 Lene me this somme / or ellis moot I deye 1376
 Daun Iohn I seye / lene me thise hundred frankes [1376, 1377]
 Pardee / I wol nat faille yow my thanks
 If that yow list to doon that I yow praye
 ffor at a certeyn day / I wol yow paye 1380
 And doon to yow / what plesance and seruice
 That I may doon / right as yow list deuise
 And but I do / god take on me vengeance
 As foul / as euere hadde Genylon of ffance 1384
 ¶ This gentil Monk / answerde in this manere
 Now trewely / myn owene lady deere
 I haue quod he / on yow so greet a rounthe
 That I yow swere / and plighite yow my trouthe 1388
 That whan youre housbonde / is to fflaundes fare
 I wol delyuere yow / out of this care
 ffor I wol brynge yow / an hundred frankes
 And with that word / he caughte hire by the flankes 1392
 And hire embraceth harde / and kiste hire ofte
 Gooth now youre wey quod he / al stille *and* softe
 And lat us dyne / as soone as þat ye may
 ffor by my chilyndre / it is pryme of day 1396
 Gooth now / and beeth as trewe as I shal be
 ¶ Now elles / god forbede sire quod she

And forth she gooth / as Iolif as a pye
 And bad the cookes / þat they sholde hem hye 1400
 So þat men mygh̃te dyne / and that anon
 Vp to hir housbonde / is this wyf ygon
 And knokketh / at his Countour boldely
 ¶ Who ther? quod he / Peter it am I. ¶ qi la?
 Quod she / what sire / how longe wol ye faste?
 How longe tyme / wol ye rekene and caste?
 Yourre sommes / and yourre bookes / and yourre thynges?
 The deuel haue part on alle swiche rekenynges 1408
 Ye haue ynough pardee / of goddes sonde
 Com down to day / and lat yourre bagges stonde
 Ne be ye nat ashamed that Daun Iohn
 Shal fasting al this day alenge goon 1412
 Lat vs heere a messe / and go we dyne
 ¶ Wyf quod this man / litel kanstow deuyne
 The curious bisynesse / that we haue
 ffor of vs Chapmen / al so god me saue 1416
 And by that lord / þat clepid is Seint Yve
 Scarsly amonges .xij. ten shul thryue
 Continuelly / lastynge vn to oure age
 We may wel / make chiere / and good visage 1420
 And dryue forth the world / as it may be
 And kepen / oure estaat in pryuetee
 Til we be deed / or elles that we pleye
 A pilgrimage / or goon out of the weye 1424
 And therfore / haue I greet necessitee [leaf 150]
 Vp on this queynte world tauyse me
 ffor euere moore / we moote stonde in drede
 Of hap̃ and ffortune / in oure chapmanhede 1428
 ¶ To fflaundes / wol I go / to morwe at day
 And come agayn / as soone as euere I may
 ffor which my deere wyf I thee hiseke
 As be to euery wight buxom and meke 1432
 And for to kepe oure good / be curious
 And honestly / gouerne wel oure hous

Thou hast ynough / in euery maner wise
 That / to a thrifty houshold may suffise 1436
 Thee lakketh noon array / ne no vitaille
 Of siluer in thy purs / shaltow nat faille
 And with that word / his Countour dore he shette
 And doun he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette 1440
 But hastily / a messe was ther seyde
 And spedily / the tables were yleyde
 And to the dyner / faste they hem spedde
 And richely / this Monk / the chapman fedde 1444
 ¶ At after dyner / daun Iohn sobrelly
 This Chapman took a-part and priuely
 He seyde hym thus / cosyn it standeth so
 That wel I se / to Brugges / wol ye go 1448
 God and seint Austyn / spede yow and gyde
 I prey yow cosyn / wisely that ye ryde
 Gouverneth yow also / of youre diete
 Atemprelly / and namely in this hete 1452
 Bitwix vs two / nedeth no strange fare
 ffare wel cosyn / god shilde yow fro care
 And if þat any thyng by day or nyght
 If it lye in my power / and my myght 1456
 That ye me wol comande in any wyse
 It shal be doon / right as ye wol deuyse
 ¶ O thyng er þat ye goon / if it may be
 I wolde prey yow / for to lene me 1460
 An hundred frankes / for a wyke or tweye
 ffor certein beestes / þat I moste beye
 To stoore with a place þat is oures
 God helpe me so / I wolde it were youre 1464
 I shal nat faille / surely at my day
 Nat for a thousand frankes a Mile way
 But lat this thyng be secree / I yow preye
 ffor yet to nyght / thise beestes moot I beye 1468
 And fare now wel / myn owene cosyn deere
 Graunt mercy / of youre cost / and of youre cheere

¶ This noble marchant / gentilly anon
 Answerde / and seyde o cosyn myn Daun Iohn 1472
 Now sikerly / this is a smal requeste [leaf 150, back]
 My gold is youres / whan þat it yow leste
 And nat oonly my gold / but my chaffare
 Take what yow list god shilde þat ye spare 1476
 ¶ But o thyng is / ye knowe it wel ynogh
 Of Chapmen / that hir moneie is hir plogh
 We may creaunce / whil we haue a name
 But goldlees for to be / it is no game 1480
 Paye it agayn / whan it lith in youre ese
 After my myghȝt / ful fayn wolde I yow plesse
 ¶ Thise hundred frankes / he fette hym forth anon
 And priuely / he took hem to daun Iohn 1484
 No wight in al this world / wiste of this loone
 Sauynge this Marchant / and daun Iohn alloone
 They drynke / and speke / and rome a while and pleye
 Til þat daun Iohn / rideth to his Abbeye 1488
The morwe cam / and forth this Marchant rideth
 To fflaundes ward / his prentys wel hym gydeth
 Til he cam / in to Brugges murily
 Now gooth this Marchant faste and bisily 1492
 Aboute his nede / and byeth and creaunceth
 He neither / pleyeth at dees ne daunceth
 But as a Marchant shortly for to telle
 He let his lyf / and there I lete hym dwelle 1496
The sonday next this Marchant was agon
 To seint Denys / ycomen is Daun Iohn
 With crowne and berde all fressh and newe y-shaue
 In al the hous / ther nas so litel a knaue 1500
 Ne no wight elles / þat he nas ful fayn
 That my lord Daun Iohn / was come agayn
 And shortly / right to the point for to gon
 This faire wyf accorded with daun Iohn 1504
 That for thise hundred frankes / he sholde al nyght
 Haue hire in hise armes / bolt upright

And this acord / parfourned was in dede
 In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede 1508
 Til it was day / þat Daun Ioħn wente his way
 And bad the meynee / fare wel haue good day
 ffor noon of hem / ne no wight in the toun
 Hath of daun Ioħn / right no suspecion 1512
 And forth he rydeth / hoom to his Abbeye
 Or where hym list. namoore of hym I seye
This Marchant whan þat ended was the faire
 To Seint Denys / he gan for to repaire 1516
 And with his wyf he maketh feeste and cheere
 And telleth hire / that Chaffare is so deere
 That nedes / moste he make a cheuyssaſice
 ffor he was bounden / in a reconyssaſice 1520
 To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon [leaf 151]
 ffor which / this Marchant is to Parys gon
 To borwe / of certeine freendes þat he hadde
 A certeyn frankes / and somme with him he ladde 1524
 And whan þat he was come / in to the toun
 ffor greet chiertee / and greet affection
 Vn to daun Ioħn / he gooth hym first to pleye
 Nat for to axe / or borwe of hym moneye 1528
 But for to wite / and seen of his welfare
 And for to tellen hym / of his chaffare
 As freendes doon / whan they been met yfeere
 Daun Ioħn / hym maketh feeste and murye cheere 1532
 And he hym tolde agayn / ful specially
 How he hadde wel yboghth and graciously
 Thanked be god / al hool his marchandise
 Saue þat he moste / in alle maner wise 1536
 Maken a cheuyssaſice / as for his beste
 And thanne / he sholde been / in ioye and reste
 ¶ Daun Ioħn answerde / certes I am fayn
 That ye in heele / ar comen hom agayn 1540
 And if þat I were riche / as haue I blisse
 Of twenty thousand sheeld / shold ye nat mysse

ffor ye / so kyndely / this oother day
 Lente me gold / and as I kan and may 1544
 I thanke yow / by god and by seint Iame
 But nathelees / I took vn to oure dame
 Yourre wyf / at hom / the same gold ageyn
 Vpon yourre bench / she woot it wel certeyn 1548
 By certeyn tokenes / that I kan yow telle
 Now by yourre leue / I may no lenger dwelle
 Oure Abbot wole out of this toun anon
 And in his compaignye / moot I goon 1552
 Grete wel oure dame / myn owene Nece sweete
 And fare wel deere cosyn / til we meete
This Marchant^t which þat was ful war *and* wys
 Creanced hath / and payd eek in Parys 1556
 To certeyn lumbardes / redy in hir hond^t
 The somme of gold / and hadde of hem his bond^{t. obligacionem}
 And hoom he gooth / murie / as a Papeiay
 ffor wel he knew / he stood in swich array 1560
 That nedes moste he wynne in that viage
 A thousand^t frankes / abouen al his costage
 ¶ His wyf ful redy / mette hym atte gate
 As she was wont^t of oold vsage algate 1564
 And al that nyght in myrthe they bisette
 ffor he was riche / and cleerly out of dette
 Whan it was day / this Marchant gan embraco
 His wyf / al newe / and kiste hire on hir face 1568
 And vp he gooth / and maketh it ful tough^t [leaf 151, back]
 ¶ Namooore quod she / by god ye haue ynough^t
 And wantownely agayn / with hym she pleyde
 ¶ Til atte laste / this Marchant seyde 1572
 By god quod he / I am a litel wrooth^t
 With yow my wyf / al-though^t it were me looth
 And woot ye why / by god as þat I gesse
 That ye han maad / a manere straungenesse 1576
 Bitwixen me / and my cosyn daun Iohn
 Ye sholde han warned me / er I had gon

That he yow hadde / an hundred frankes payed
 By redy tokene / and heeld hym yuele apayed 1580
 ffor þat I to hym spak of cheuyssañce
 Me semed so / as by his contenañce
 But natheles / by god oure heuene kyng
 I thoughte nat to axen hym no thyng 1584
 I prey thee wyf / as do namoore so
 Telle me alwey / er that I fro thee go
 If any dettour / hath in myn absence
 Ypayed thee / lest thurgh thy necligence 1588
 I myghte hym axe / a thing that he hath payed
 ¶ This wyf was nat afered nor affrayed
 But boldely she seyde / and that anon
 Marie / I defie / the false Monk / daun Iohn 1592
 I kepe nat of hise tokenes / neuer a deel
 He took me certeyn gold / that woot I wee
 What yuel thedam / on his Monkes snowte
 ffor god it woot I wende withouten doute 1596
 That he hadde yeue it me / bycause of yow
 To doon ther-with / myn honour and my prow
 ffor cosynage / and eek for beele cheere
 That he hath had / ful ofte tymes heere 1600
 But sith I se / I stonde in this disioynt
 I wol answere yow / shortly to the poynt
 ¶ Ye han mo slakkere dettours / than am I
 ffor I wol paye yow / wel and redily 1604
 ffro day to day / and if so be I faille
 I am youre wyf score it vp-on my taille
 And I shal paye / as soone as euer I may
 ffor by my trouthe / I haue on myn array 1608
 And nat on wast bistowed euery deel
 And for I haue / bistowed it so weel
 ffor youre honour / for goddes sake I seye
 As be nat wrooth / but lat vs laughe and pleye 1612
 Ye shal / my ioly body / haue to wedde
 By god I wol nat paye yow but a bedde

forgyue it me / myn owene spouse deere
 Turne hiderward / and maketh bettre cheere 1616
 ¶ This Marchant saugh / ther was no remedie (leaf 153)
 And for to chide / it nere but greet folie
 Sith that the thyng^r may nat amended be
 Now wyf he seyde / and I foryeue it thee 1620
 But by thy lyf^r ne be namoore so large
 Keeps bet^r oure good / that yeue I thee in charge
 Thus endeth my tale / and god vs sende
 Taillynge ynough / vn-to oure lyues ende Amen 1624

¶ Heere endeth / the Shipmannes tale 1624

¶ Bihoold^ð the murie wordes of the Hoost^t to the
Shipman and to the lady Prioress. [on leaf 182]

Wel seyð by corpus dominus quod our Hoost^t
Now longe / moote thou saille by the cost^t
Sire gentil maister / gentil Maryneer
God yeue this Monk / a thousand^ð last^t quade yeer 1628
A ha felawes / beth ware of swiche a lape
The Monk^t putte / in the mannes hood an Ape
And in his wyues eek^t by Seint Austyn
Draweth no Monkes / moore vn to youre In 1632
¶ But now passe ouer / and lat vs seke aboute
Who shal now / telle first^t of al this route
Another tale / and *with* that word he sayde
As curteisly / as it had ben a mayde 1636
My lady Prioress / by youre leue
So that I wiste / I sholde yow nat greue
I wolde demen / that ye tellen sholde
A tale next^t if so were that ye wolde 1640
Now wol ye vouche sauð^t my lady deere
¶ Gladly quod she / and seyde as ye shal heere

¶ Explicit. ॐ

¶ The prologe of the Prioresses tale. 𐀚 [on leaf 152]

Domine dominus noster.

O lord oure lord / thy name how merueillous
 Is in this large world / ysprad quod she
 ffor noght oonly / thy laude precious
 Parfourned is / by men of dignitee 1646
 But by the mouth of children / thy bountee
 Parfourned is / for on the brest soukyng
 Somytyme / shewen they thyn heriyng 1649

Wherfore in laude / as I best kan or may [leaf 152, back]
 Of thee / and of the lylle flour
 Which that the bar / and is a mayde alway
 To telle a storie / I wol do my labour 1653
 Nat that I may / encreessen hir honour
 ffor she hir self / is honour and the roote
 Of bountee next hir sone / and soules boote 1656

O mooder mayde / o mayde mooder fre
 O busshe vnbrant brennyng in Moyse's sight
 That rauyseedest down fro the deitee
 Thurgh thyn humblesse / the goost pat in thalight 1660
 Of whos vertu / whan he thyn herte light
 Conceyued was / the faulres sapience
 Helpe me / to telle it in thy reuerence 1663

Lady / thy bountee / thy magnificence
 Thy vertu / and thy grete humylitee
 Ther may no tonge expresse / in no science
 ffor somtyme lady / er men praye to thee 1667
 Thou goost biforn / of thy benyngnytee
 And getest vs / thurgh lyght of thy preyere
 To gyden vs / vn to thy sone so deere 1670

My konnyng' is so wayk' o blisful queene
 ffor to declare / thy grete worthynesse
 That I ne may / the weighte nat susteene
 But as a child / of twelf / monthe oold or lesse 1674
 That kan vnnethe / any word expresse
 Right so fare I / and therfore I yow preye
 Gydeth my song' þat I shal of yow seye 1677

¶ Explicit 𐞂

¶ Heere bigynneth the Prioresses tale.

Ther was in Asye / in a greet Citee *[Painting of
the Prioress
on the left]*
 Amonges cristene folk / a Iewerye
 Sustened / by a lord / of that contree
 ffor foule vsure / and lucre of vileynye ¶ *tarpe lucrum* . .
 Hateful / to Crist' and to his compaignye
 And thurgh the strete / men mygh'te ride or wende
 ffor it was free / and open at eyther ende 1684

A litel scole / of cristen folk' ther stood *[leaf 153]*
 Doun at the ferther ende / in which ther were
 Children an heepe / ycomen of cristen blood
 That lerned in that scole / yeer by yeer 1688
 Swich manere doctrine / as men vsed there
 This is to seyn / to syngen / and to rede
 As smale children doon / in hire childhede 1691

Among' thise children / was a wydwes sone
 A litel clergeon / seuen yeer of age
 That day by day / to scole was his wone
 And eek also / where as he saugh thymage 1695
 Of Cristes mooder he hadde in vsage
 As hym was taught' to knele adoun and seye
 His Aue Marie / as he goth by the weye 1698

Thus hath this wydwe / hir litel sone ytaught
 Oure blisful lady cristes mooder deere
 To worshiþe ay / and he forgate it naught
 ffor sely child / wol alday soone leere 1702
 But ay / whan I remembre on this mateere
 Seint Nicholas / stant euere in my presence
 ffor he so yong' to Crist' dide reuerence 1705

This litel child his litel book lernynge
 As he sat in the scole / at his prymer
 He / Alma redemptoris / herde synge
 As children / lerned hire Anthiphoner 1709
 And as he dorste / he drough hym ner and ner
 And herkned ay / the wordes and the noote
 Til he the firste vers / koude al by rote 1712

Noght wiste he / what this latyn was to seye
 ffor he so yong' and tendre was of age
 But on a day / his felawe gan he preye
 Texpounden hym this song' in his langage 1716
 Or telle hym / why this song' was in vsage
 This preyde he hym / to construe and declare
 ful often tyme / vpon hise knowes bare 1719

His felawe / which that elder was than he
 Answerde hym thus / this song I haue herl seye
 Was maked / of oure blisful lady free
 Hire to salue / and eek hire for to preye 1723
 To been oure help / and socour whan we deye
 I kan na moore / expounde in this mateere
 I lerne song' I kan but smal grammeere 1726

¶ And is this song' maked in reuerence (leaf 152, back)
 Of cristes mooder' seyde / this Innocent'
 Now certes / I wol do my diligence
 To konne it al / er Cristemasse is went' 1730

Though þat / I for my prymer shal be shent
 And shal be beten / thries in an houre
 I wol it konne / oure lady for to honoure 1733

His felawe / taughte hym homward priuely
 ffro day to day / til he koude it by rote
 And thanne / he song' it wel and boldely
 ffro word to word' to word' acordynge with the note 1737
 Twies a day / it passed thurgh his throte
 To scoleward' and homward whan he wente
 On cistes mooder / set was his entente 1740

¶ As I haue seyd / thurgh out the Iuerie
 This litel child' / as he cam to and fro
 fful murily / wolde he synge and crie
 O Alma redemptoris / eueure mo 1744
 The swetnesse / his herte perced so
 Of cistes mooder / that to hire to preye
 He kan nat stynte / of syngyng' by the weye 1747

Ov're firste foo / the serpent Sathanas ¶ Auctor
 That hath / in Iues herte his waspes nest'
 Vp swal / and seide / o. hebrayk' peple allas
 Is this to yow / a thyng' þat is honest' 1751
 That swich a boy / shal walken as hym lest'
 In youre despit' and synge of swich sentence
 Which is / agayn oure lawes reuerence 1754

ffro thennes forth / the Iues han conspired
 This Innocent' out of this world to chace
 An homycide / ther to / han they hyred
 That in an Aleye / hadde a priuee place 1758
 And as the child' / gan forby for to pace
 This cursed Iew hym hente / and heeld hym faste
 And kitte his throte / and in a pit hym caste 1761

I seye / that in a wardrobe / they hym threwe
 Where as thise Iewes / purgen hire entraille
 O cursed folk / of Herodes al newe
 What may youre yuel entente yow auaille 1765
 Mordre wol out^t certeyn / it wol nat faille
 And namely / ther thonour of god shal sprede
 The blood out crieth / on youre cursed dede 1768

¶ O martir / sowded to virginitee [leaf 154]
 Now maystow syngen / folwyng euer in oon
 The white lamb celestial quod she
 Of which / the grete Euaungelist^t Seint Iohn 1772
 In Pathmos wroot^t which seith / þat they þat goon
 Biforn this lamb / and synge a song al newe
 That neuere^{1. carnalliter} fleshly / wommen they ne knewe 1775

¶ This poure wydwe / awaiteth al that nyght^t
 After hir litel child / but he cam noght^t
 ffor which as soone / as it was dayes lyght^t
 With face pale of drede / and bisy thoght^t 1779
 She hath at scole / and elles where hym soght^t
 Til finally / she gan so fer espie
 That he / last seyn was in the Iuerie 1782

With moodres pitee / in hir brest^t enclosed
 She gooth / as she were half / out of hir mynde
 To euery place / where she hath supposed
 By liklihede / hir litel child to fynde 1786
 And euer / on Cristes mooder/ meeke and kynde
 She cride / and atte laste / thus she wroghte
 Among^t the cursed Iues / she hym soghte 1789

She frayneth / and she preyeth pitously
 To euery Iew / þat dwelte in thilke place
 To telle hire / if hir child / wente oght forby
 They seyde nay / but Ihesu of his grace 1793

Yaf in hir thoght inwith a litel space
 That in that place / after hir sone she cryde
 Where he was casten / in a pit bisyde 1796

O grete god / that parfournest thy laude ¶ Auctor
 By mouth of Innocentz / lo heere thy myght
 This gemme of chastite / this Emeraude
 And eek of martirdom / the Ruby bright 1800
 Ther he with throte ykoruen lay vpright
 He Alma redemptoris / gan to synge
 So loude / þat al the place gan to rynge 1803

¶ The cristene folk / that thurgh the strete wente
 In coomen / for to wondre vp on this thyng
 And hastily / they for the Prouost sente
 He cam anon / with outen taryng 1807
 And herieth Crist that is of heuene kyng
 And eek his mooder / honour of mankynde
 And after that / the Iewes leet he bynde 1810

¶ This child / with pitous lamentacioñ [leaf 154, back]
 Vp taken was / syngynge his song alway
 And with honour / of greet procession
 They carien hym / vn to the nexte Abbay 1814
 His mooder swownynge / by his beere lay
 Vnnethe / myghte the peple þat was there
 This newe Rachel / brynge fro his beere 1817

¶ With torment and with shameful deeth echon
 This Prouost dooth the Iewes for to sterue
 That of this mordre wiste / and that anon
 He nolde / no swich cursednesse obserue 1821
 Yuele shal he haue / þat yuele wol deserue
 Therefore / with wilde hors / he dide hem drawe
 And after that he heng hem by the lawe 1824

¶ Vp on this beere / ay lith this Innocent
 Biforn the chief Auter / whil the masse laste
 And after that the Abbot with his Couent
 Han sped hem / for to burien hym ful faste 1828
 And whan they / hooly water on hym caste
 Yet spak this child / whan spreynd was hooly water
 And song O Alma redemptoris mater. 1831

¶ This Abbot which þat was an hooly man
 As Monkes been / or elles oghte be
 This yonge child / to coniure he bigan
 And seyde o deere child I halsen thee 1835
 In vertu / of the hooly Trinitee
 Tel me / what is thy cause / for to synge
 Sith þat thy throte is kut to my semynge 1838

¶ My throte is kut vn to my nekke boon
 Seyde this child and as by wey of kynde
 I sholde haue dyed / ye longe tyme agon
 But Ihesu crist / as ye in bookes fynde 1842
 Wil þat his glorie / laste / and be in mynde
 And for the worship / of his mooder deere
 Yet may I synge / O Alma / loude and cleere 1845

¶ This welle of mercy Cristes mooder sweete
 I loued alwey / as after my konnynge
 And whan þat I my lyf / sholde forlete 1849
 To me she cam / and bad me for to synge
 This Anthephen / verrailly / in my deyynge
 As ye han herd / and whan þat I hadde songe
 Me thoughte / she leyde a greyn vp on my tonge 1852

Wherefore I synge / and synge I moot certeyn (leaf 155)
 In honour / of that blisful mayden free
 Til fro my tonge / of taken is the greyn
 And afterward / thus seyde she to me 1856

My litel child / now wol I fecche thee
 Whan þat the greyn / is fro thy tonge ytake
 Be nat agast I wol thee nat forsake 1859

¶ This hooly Monk this Abbot hym meene I
 His tonge out caughte / and took a-wey the greyn
 And he yaf vp the goost ful softly
 And whan this Abbot hadde this wonder seyn 1863
 Hise salte teeris / trikled down as reyn
 And gruf he fil / al plat vp on the grounde
 And stille he lay / as he had leyn ybounde 1866

The Couent eek / lay on the pauement
 Wepyng / and heryen cristes mooder deere
 And after that / they ryse and forth been went
 And taken away / this martir from his beere 1870
 And in a temple / of Marbul stones cleere
 Enclosen they / his litel body sweete
 Ther he is now / god leue us alle for to meete 1873

¶ O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln slayn also
 With cursed Iewes / as it is notable
 ffor it is / but a litel while ago
 Preye eek / for vs / we synful folk vnstable 1877
 That of his mercy / god so merciable
 On vs / his grete mercy multiplie
 ffor reuerence / of his mooder Marie Amen 1880

¶ Heere is ended / the Prioresses Tale 卐

¶ Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost to

Chaucer 𐞀

[on leaf 135]

W

Han seyð was al this miracle / euery man
 As sobre was / that wonder was to se
 Til that oure hoost¹ Iapen to bigan

¹ .i. Chaucer

And thanne at erst he looked vp on me 1884

And seyde thus / what man artow quod he?

Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an hare

ffor euere / vp on the ground / I se thee stare 1887

Approche neer / and looke vp murily

[leaf 155, back]

Now war yow sires / and lat this man haue place

He in the waast is shape / as wel as .i.

.i. Henry Bailly

This were a popet in an Arm tenbrace

1891

ffor any womman smal / and fair of face

He semeth eluyssh / by his contenaunce

ffor vn to no wight / dooth he daliaunce 1894

Sey now somewhat syn oother folk han sayð

Telle vs a tale / of myrthe / and that anon

Hoost¹ quod I / ne beth nat yuele apayð

ffor oother tale / certes kan I noon

1898

But of a rym / I lerned longe agoon

Ye that is good quod he / now shul ye heere

Som deyntee thyng me thynketh by his cheere 1901

¶ Explicit 𐞀

¶ Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas. [on leaf
155, 68]

[*The First Fit.*]

[*Each third line is on the right of its couple, in the MS.*]

L	isteth lordes in good entent	
	And I wol telle verrayment	
	Of myrthe and of solas	1904
	Al of a knyght / was fair and gent	
	In bataille / and in tourneyment	
	His name was sire Thopas	1907

¶	Yborn he was / in fer contree	
	In flaundes / al biyonde the see	
	At Poperyngt in the place	1910
	His fader was / a man ful free	
	And lord he was / of that contree	
	As it was goddes grace	1913

¶	Sire Thopas / wax a doghty swayn	
	Whit was his face as Payndemayn	
	Hise lippes rede as rose	1916
	His rode is lyk / scarlet in grayn	
	And I yow telle / in good certayn	
	He hadde / a semely nose	1919

¶	His heer / his berd / was lyk saffroun	
	That to his girdel raughte adoun	
	Hise shoos of Cordewane	1922
	Of Brugges / were his hosen broun	
	His Robe / was of Syklatoun	
	That coste many a Iane	1925

¶ He koude hunte / at wilde deer
 And ride an haukyng^t for Riuer
 With grey goshawk on honde 1928
 Ther-to he was / a good Archeer
 Of wrastlyng^t was ther noon his peer
 Ther any Ram shal stonde 1931

¶ fful many a mayde / bright in bour
 They moorne for hym paramour
 Whan hem were bet to slepe 1934
 But he was chaast^t and no lechour
 And sweete as is the Brembul flour
 That bereth the rede hepe 1937

And so bifel vp on a day
 ffor sothe / as I yow telle may
 Sire Thopas / wolde out ride 1940
 He worth / vpon his steede gray
 And in his hand a launcegay
 A long swerd / by his side 1943

¶ He priketh / thurgh a fair forest^t [leaf 136]
 Ther Inne / is many a wilde best^t
 Ye bothe bukke and hare 1946
 And as he priketh North *and* Est^t
 I telle it yow / hym hadde alme^t
 Bitidde / a sory care 1949

¶ Ther spryngen herbes / grete *and* smale
 The lycorys and Cetewale
 And many a clowe gylofre 1952
 And Notemuge / to putte in Ale
 Wheither it be moyste / or stale
 Or for to leye in cofre 1955

- ¶ The briddes synge / it is no nay
 The sparhawk' and the papeiay
 That ioye it was to heere 1958
 The thrustelcok / made eek hir lay
 The wodedowue / vp on a spray
 She sang' ful loude *and* cleere 1961
- ¶ Sire Thopas fil in loue longynge
 Al whan he herde / the thrustel synge
 And pryked / as he were wood' 1964
 His faire steede in his prikyng
 So swatte / þat men myghte *him* wrynge
 His sydes / were al blood' 1967
- ¶ Sire Thopas eek / so wery was
 ffor prikyng' on the softe gras
 So fiers was his corage 1970
 That doun he leyde *him* in that plas
 To make his steede som solas
 And yaf hym good forage • 1973
- ¶ O seinte Marie benedicite
 What eyleth / this loue at me
 To bynde me so soore 1976
 Me dremed / al this nyght' *pardee*
 An elf queene / shal my lemman be
 And slepe vnder my goore 1979
- ¶ An Elf queene / wol I loue ywis
 ffor in this world / no womman is
 Worthy to be my make' 1982
 In towne
- ¶ Alle othere wommen I forsake
 And to an Elf queene I me take
 By dale *and* eek by downe 1986

- ¶ In to his sadel / he clamb anon
 And priketh ouer stile and stoon
 An Elf queene for tespye 1989
 Til he so longe / hadde riden and goon
 That he foond / in a pryue woon
 The contree of ffairye 1992
 so wilde
 ffor in that contree was ther noon?
 [. *no gap in the MS.*]
 Neither wyf ne childe 1996
- ¶ Til þat ther cam a greet geaunt
 His name was / sire Olifaunt
 A perilous man of dede 1999
 He seyde child by Termagaunt /
 But if thou prike / out of myn haunt
 Anon I sle thy steede 2002
 with mace
- ¶ Heere is / the queene of ffairye
 With harpe / and pipe and symphonye
 Dwellynge in this place 2006
- ¶ The child seyde / Al so moote I thee
 Tomorwe / wol I meete *with* thee
 Whan I haue myn Armour 2009
- ¶ And yet I hope / *par* ma fay
 That thou shalt *with* this launcegay
 Abyen it ful sowre 2012
 Thy mawe
- Thyn hauberk / shal I percen / if I may¹ [*all over an erasure*]
 Er it be fully pryme of day
 ffor heere thou shalt be slawe 2016

¶ Sire Thopas / drow abak ful faste
 This geant' at hym stones caste
 Out of a fel staf slynge 2019
 ¶ But faire escapeth sire Thopas
 And al it was thurgh goddes gras
 And thurgh his fair berynge 2022

Yet listeth / lordes / to my tale [leaf 156, back]
 Murier than the Nightyngale
 I wol yow rowne 2025
 How sir Thopas / with sydes smale
 Prikyng' ouer hiȝh and dale
 Is comen agayn to towne 2028

¶ His murie men / comanded he
 To make hym / bothe game and glee
 for nedes / moste he fighte 2031
 With a geaunt' with heuedes three
 for paramour and Iolitee
 Of oon / that shoon ful brighte 2034

¶ Do come he seyde / my Mynstrales
 And geestours / for to tellen tales
 Anon in myn Armynge 2037
 Of Romances / that been Roiales
 Of Popes / and of Cardinales
 And eek' of loue likyng 2040

¶ They sette hym first' sweete wyn
 And Mede eek' in a Mazelyn
 And Roial spicerye 2043
 And Gyngebreed / þat was ful fyn
 And lycorys and eek Comyn
 With sugre þat is so trye 2046

¶ He dide / next his white leere
 Of clooth of lake / fyn and cleere
 A breech / and eek a sherte 2049
 And next his sherte an Aketon
 And ouer that an haubergeon
 ffor Percyng of his herte 2052

¶ And ouer that / a fyn hawberk
 Was al ywrought of Iewes werk
 ful strong it was of plate 2055
 And ouer that his cote Armour
 As whit as is / a lilye flour
 In which / he wol debate 2058

¶ His sheeld / was al / of gold so reed
 And ther inne / was a bores heed
 A Charbocle bisyde 2061
 And there he swoor / on ale and breed
 How þat the geaunt shal be deed
 Bityde what bityde 2064

¶ Hise Iambeux were of quyrboilly
 His swerdes shethe of Yuory
 His helm of laton bright 2067
 His sadel was of Rewel boon
 His brydel / as the sonne shoon
 Or as the moone light 2070

¶ His spere it was / of fyn Ciprees
 That bodeth werre / and no thyng pees
 The heed / ful sharpe ygrounde 2073
 ¶ His steede was / al dappull gray
 It gooth an Ambil in the way
 ful softly and rounde 2076

In londe

¶ Loo lordes myne / heere is a fit'

If ye wol any moore of it'

To telle it / wol I fonde 2080

[*The Second Fit.*]

NOw holde youre mouth *par* charitee
Bothe knyght' and lady free

And herkneth to my spelle 2083

¶ Of batailles / and of Chiualry

And of ladyes / loue drury

Anon I wol yow telle 2086

¶ Men speken of Romances of prys

Of Hornchild' / and of Ypotys

Of Beves and of sir Gy 2089

Of sir lybeux and pleyn damour

But sir Thopas / he bereth the flour

Of Roial Chiualry 2092

¶ His goode Steede / al he bistrood'

And forth / vpon his wey he rood'

As sparcle / out of the bronde 2095

¶ Vp on his Creest' He bar a tour

[leaf 157]

And ther Inne / stiked a lilie flour

God shilde his cors fro shonde 2098

¶ And for he was / a knyght Auntrous

He nolde slepen / in noon hous

But liggen in his hoode 2101

¶ His brighte helm / was his wonger

And by hym / baiteth his dextrer

Of herbes fyne and goode 2104

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GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Ellesmere MS.

¶ Hym self / drank water of the well

As dide the knyght sire PercyueH

So worly vnder wede

¶ Til on a day

2108

¶ Heere the Hoost^r stynteth Chaucer / of his tale of
Thopas 𐀓

Na moore of this / for goddes dignitee
Quod oure hoost^r for thou makest me
So wery / of thy verray lewednesse
That also wisly / god my soule blesse 2112
Min eres aken / of thy drasty speche
Now swich a Rym / the deuel I biteche
This may wel / be Rym dogerel quod he
¶ Why so quod I / why wiltow lette me ? 2116
Moore of my tale / than another man
Syn that it is / the beste tale I kan
¶ By god quod he / for pleyonly at a word^r
Thy drasty rymyng / is nat worth a toord^r 2120
Thou doost^r noght elles / but despendest tyme
Sire at o word / thou shalt no lenger ryme
Lat se / wher thou kanst tellen aught in geeste
Or telle in prose / somewhat at the leeste 2124
In which ther be som murthe / or som doctryne
¶ Gladly quod I / by goddes sweete pync
I wol yow telle / a litel thyng in prose
That oghite liken yow / as I suppose 2128
Or elles *certes* / ye been to daungerous
It is a moral tale vertuous
Al be it take somtyme / in sondry wyse
Of sondry folk^r as I shal yow deuyse 2132
¶ As thus / ye woot þat euery Euaungelist/
That telleth vs / the peyne of Ihesu crist^r
Ne seith nat alle thyng^r as his felawe doothⁿ
But nathelees / hir sentence is al soothⁿ 2136
And alle acorden / as in hire sentence
Al be ther / in hir tellyng^r difference

ffir somme of hem seyn moore / and somme seyn lesse
 Whan they / his pitous passioun expresse 2140
 I meene / of Mark Mathew / Luc and Iohn
 But doutelees / hir sentence is all oon
 ¶ Therfore lordynges alle / I yow biseche [leaf 157, back]
 If þat yow thynke / I varie as in my speche 2144
 As thus / though that I telle som what moore
 Of prouerbes / than ye han herd bifoore
 Comprehended / in this litel tretys heere
 To enforce with / theeffect of my mateere 2148
 And though I / nat the same wordes seye
 As ye han herd / yet to yow alle I preye
 Blameth me nat for as in my sentence
 Shul ye / nowher / fynden difference 2152
 ffro the sentence / of this tretys lyte
 After the which / this murye tale I write
 And therfore / herkneth / what þat I shal seye
 And lat me tellen / al my tale I preye 2156

¶ Explicit 𐀚

[There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines. ¶ stands for a triangular pause-mark in the MS.]

[Ellesmere MS, on leaf 157, back.]

[Painting of Chaucer on horseback.]

A ¶ Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Melibee ¶

[2157]

Yong man called Melibeus myghty and riche /
bigat vp on his wyf that called was Prudence / a
doghter which that called was Sophie /

[2158] Vpon a day bifel þat he / for his desport/
is went in to the feeldes hym to pleye / [2159] his wyf /
and eek his doghter / hath he left inwith his hous / of
which the dores / weren fast yshette [2160] ¶ thre of hise
olde foes / han it espyed and setten laddres / to the walles
of his hous / and by wyndowes been entred / [2161] and
betten his wyf / and wounded his doghter with fyue
mortal woundes in fyue sondry places [2162] ¶ this is to
seyn / in hir feet. in hire handes /. in hir erys /. in hir
nose /. and in hire mouth and leften hire for deed / and
wenten away

[2163] ¶ Whan Melibeus / retourned was in to his
hous / and saugh al this meschief; he lyk a mad man
rentynge his clothes / gan to wepe and crie

[2164] ¶ Prudence his wyf / as ferforth as she dorste /
bisoghte hym / of his wepyng for to stynte / [2165] but nat
for-thy / he gan to crie and wepen euere longer the moore

[2166] ¶ This noble wyf Prudence / remembred hire /
vpon the sentence of Ouide / in his book / that cleped is the
remedie of loue ¶ where as he seith / [2167] he is a fool /
that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in the deeth of hire
chilþ / til she haue wept hir fille / as for a certein tyme
[2168] ¶ And thanne / shal man doon his diligence with
anyable wordes / hire to reconforte / and preyen hire of

¶ Ouldins / de
remedio amoris.

hir wepyng' for to stynte [2169] ¶ ffor which resoñ this
noble wyf Prudence / suffred hir housbonde for to wepe
and crie / as for a certein space /. [2170] And whan she
saugh hir tyme / she seyde hym in this wise ¶ Allas / my
lord quod she / why make ye youre self for to be lyk' a
fool / [2171] for sothe / it aperteneth nat to a wys man /
to maken swiche a sorwe / [2172] youre ¹ doghter / with
the grace of god shal warisshe and escape / [2173] And al
were it so / that she right now were deed ? ye ne oughte
nat' as for hir deeth youre self to destroye [2174] ¶ Senek'
seith / the wise man / shal nat take to greet discomfort' for
the deeth of his children / [2175] but *certes* / he sholde
suffren it in pacience / as wel / as he / abideth the deeth /
of his owene. *propre persone*

¶ Seneca

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus / answerde anon and seyde
¶ What' man quod he sholde of his wepyng stente / that
hath so greet a cause for to wepe ? [2177] Ihesu crist'
oure lord hym self wepte for the deeth of Lazarus hys
freend [2178] ¶ Prudence answerde ||. Certes wel I woot' ||
Attempree wepyng' is no thyng deffended to hym þat
sorweful is amonges folk in sorwe / but it is rather graunted
hym to wepe [2179] ¶ The Apostle Paul vn-to the
Romayns writeth || Man shal reioyse with hem that maken
ioye and wepen / with swich folk as wepen [2180] ¶ But
though attempree wepyng be ygraunted / outrageous
wepyng' *certes* is deffended / [2181] Mesure of wepyng'
sholde be considered / after the loore þat techeth us Senek'
[2182] ¶ Whan that thy frend is deed quod he / lat nat
thyne eyen to moyste been of teeris / ne to muche drye / Al
though the teeris come to thyne eyen / lat' hem nat falle /
[2183] And whan thou hast for-goon thy frend' / do dili-
gence to gete another frend' / and this is moore wysdom /
than for to wepe for thy frend' which that thou hast lorn /
for ther-Inne is no boote / [2184] And therefore / if ye
gouerne yow by sapience / put away sorwe / out of youre
herte [2185] ¶ Remembre yow / þat Ihesus Syrak' seith

¶ Melibeus

¶ Qualiter Ihesus
christus fleuit
propter mortem
lazari

¶ Prudence

¶ Apostolus Pau-
lus ad Romanos

¶ Seneca

¶ Ihesus Syrak'

¶ A man that is ioyous and glad in herte / it hym conserueth florissynge in his age / But soothly / sorweful herte / maketh hise bones drye [2186] ¶ He seith eek / thus / That sorwe in herte / sleeth ful many a man [2187] ¶ Salomon seith / That right as Motthes in the shepes flees / anoyeth to the clothes / *and* the smale wormes to the tree / right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte / [2188] wherfore / vs oghte as wel in the deeth of oure children / as in the losse of opere goodes temporels haue pacience

¶ Memorandum
de Iob

[2189] ¶ Remembre yow vp on the pacient Iob / whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substance / and in his body endured and receyued ful many a greuous tribulacion: yet seyde he thus [2190] ¶ Oure lord / [*le m'a donné; nostre Seigneur*] hath biraft it me / right as oure lord hath wold / right so it is doon / blessed be the name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To this foreseide

¶ Melibeus

thynges / answerde Melibeus / vn to his wyf Prudence ¶ Alle thy wordes quod he been sothe / and therwith profitable / but trewely / myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously / that I noot what to doone [2192] ¶ Lat calle

¶ Prudence

quod Prudence thy trewe freendes alle / and thy lynage / whiche that been wise / telleth youre cas / and herkneþ what they seye in conseillynge and yow gouerne after hire sentence [2193] ¶ Salomon seith / werk alle thy thynges by conseil / and thou shalt neuer repente

¶ Salomon

[2194] ¶ Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence / this Melibeus / leet callen a greet congregacion of folk. [2195] as surgiens / Phisiciens olde folk and yonge / and somme of hise olde enemys reconsiled as by hir semblaunt to his loue / and in to his grace / [2196] and ther-with-al / ther coomen somme of hise neighebores / that diden hym reuerence / moore for drede than for loue / as it happeth ofte / [2197] ¶ Ther coomen also / ful many subtille flatereres and wise Aduocatz lerned in the lawe /

[2198] And whan this folk / togidre assembled weren / this Melibeus in sorweful wise / shewed hem his cas /

[2199] and by the manere of his ¹speche / it semed wel /
that in herte / he baar a crueel Ire / redy to doon venge-
aunce vp on hise foes / and sodeynly desired / that the
werre sholde bigynne / [2200] but natheles / yet axed he
hise conseil vpon this matiere [2201] ¶ A Surgien by
licence and assent of swiche as weren wise / vp roos / and
to Melibeus / seyde / as ye may heere

[2202] ¶ Sire quod he / as to vs Surgiens aperteneth /
that we do to euery wight the beste that we kan / where as
we been withholde / and to oure pacientz that we do no
damage / [2203] wherfore it happeth many tyme and ofte /
that whan twey men / han euerich wounded oother / oon
same surgien heeleth hem bothe / [2204] wherfore / vn to
oure Art it is nat pertinent to norice werre ne parties
to supporte ¶. [2205] But certes / as to the warisschyng of
yours doghter / al be it so / that she perilously be
wounded / we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to
nyght that with the grace of god / she shal be hool and
sound / as soone as is possible [2206] ¶ Almost / right
in the same wise / the Phisiciens answerden / saue that
they seyden / a fewe woordes moore / [2207] That right
as maladies / been cured by hir contraries ¶ right so / shul
men warisshe werre by vengeaunce [2208] ¶ Hise neighe-
bores ful of enuye / hise feyned freendes that semeden
reconsiled / and hise flatereres / [2209] maden semblant
of wepyng and empeireden and agreggeden muchel of this
matiere in preisyng greetly Melibee / of myght / of power /
of riches / and of freendes despisyng / the power of hise
Aduersaries / [2210] and seiden outrelly that he anon
sholde wrenken hym on hise foes and bigynne werre

[2211] ¶ Vp roos thanne an Aduocat that was wys /
by leue and by conseil of othere that were wise / and seide ¶.
[2212] Lordynges / the nede for which we been assembled
in this place / is a ful heuy thyng and an heigh matiere /
[2213] by cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that
hath be doon / and eek by reson of the grete damages that

¶ Nota de
Iudiciis &
eorum Iudiciis

in tyme comynge / been possible to fallen for this same
cause / [2214] and eek^t by resoñ of the grete richesse and
power of the parties bothe / [2215] for the whiche resoñs /
it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matiere [2216]
¶ wherfore / Melibeus this is oure sentence / we conseil-
le yow abouen alle thyng^t. that right anon / thou do thy
diligence in keypyng of thy propre persone / in swich a
wise þat thou wante noon espie / ne wacche / thy persone
for to saue [2217] ¶ And after that we conseil-
le þat in thyn hous / thou sette sufficeant garnisoñ so that they may /
as wel thy body as thyn hous defende [2218] ¶ But certes /
for to moeue werre / or sodeynly for to doon vengeance /
we may nat demen / in so litel tyme / that it were profit-
able /. [2219] Wherfore we axen leyser and espace / to haue
deliberaciõ in this cas to deme / [2220] ffor the commune
prouerbe seith thus ¶ He that soone deemeth. soone shal
repente [2221] And eek^t men seyn / that thilke Iuge is
wys that soone vnderstondeth a matiere and Iuggeth by
leyser [2222] ¶ for al be it so that alle taryng be anyful /
algates / it is nat to repreue in yeyunge of Iuggement^t ne in
vengeance takyng^t whan it is sufficeant^t and resonable
[2223] ¶ And that shewed oure lord Ihesu crist by en-
sample / for whan that the womman / that was taken in
Auowtrie was broght^t in his presence / to knowen / what
sholde be doon with hire persone / al be it so that he wiste
wel hym self / what that he wolde answer / yet ne wolde he
nat answer sodeynly / but he wolde haue deliberaciõ / and
in the ground^t he wroot^t twies / [2224] and by thise
causes / we axen deliberaciõ / and we shal thanne by
the grace of god / conseil-
le thee thyng / that shal be
profitable /

[2225] ¶ Vp stirten thanne / the yonge folk atones /
and the mooste partie of that compaignye scorned the olde
wise men and bigonnen to make noyse / and seyden / that
[2226] right so / as whil that Iren is hoot^t men sholden
smyte / right so / men sholde wreken hir wronges / while

þat they been fresshe and newe / and with loud voys / they
criden werre / werre

[2227] ¶ Vp roos tho / oon of thise olde wise / and
with his hand made contenaunce / that men sholde
holden hem stille and yeuen hym Audience [2228]

¶ Lordynges quod he / ther is ful many a man / that
crieth werre werre / that woot ful litel what werre
amounteth [2229] ¶ werre at his bigynnyng hath so greet
an entryng and so large / that euery wight may entre
whan hym liketh / and lightly fynde werre / [2230] but
certes / what ende that shal ther-of bifalle / it is nat light
to knowe || [2231] ffor soothly / whan þat werre is ones
bigonne / ther is ful many a child vnborn of his mooder /
that shal sterue yong by cause of that ilke werre / or elles
lyue in sorwe / and dye in wrecchednesse ||. [2232] And
ther fore / er þat any werre bigynne / men moste haue
greet conseil and greet deliberacion [2233] ¶ And whan
this olde man / wende / to enforcen his tale by resons /
wel ny alle atones / bigonne they to rise for to breken his
tale / and beden hym ful ofte / hise wordes for to abregge /
[2234] ffor soothly / he that precheth to hem / that listen
nat heeren hise wordes / his sermon hem anoieth [2235]

¶ ffor Ihesus Syrak seith / that Musik in wepyng is
anoyous thyng ||. this is to seyn || As muche auailleth to
speken bfore folk / to whiche his speche anoyeth / as it is
to synge / biforn hym that wepeth ||. [2236] And this wise
man / saugh that hym wanted audience / and al shamefast
he sette hym doun agayn [2237] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || ther
as thou ne mayst haue noon Audience / enforce thee nat
to speke [2238] ¶ I see wel quod this wise man / þat the
commune prouerbe is sooth || That good conseil wanteth /
whan it is moost [nede]

¶ Ihesus
Syrak /

¶ Salomon

[2239] ¶ Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil / many
folk that priuely in his eere conseyllid hym certeyn thyng.
and conseyllid hym the contrarie in general Audience

[2240] Whan Melibeus hadde herd / that the gretteste ¶ Melibeus

- partie of his conseil / weren accorded þat he sholde maken
werre / anoon / he consented to hir conseillynge and fully
affirmed hire sentence / [2241] Thanne dame Prudence /
whan þat she saugh / how that hir housbonde shoope hym
for to wreken hym on hise foes / and to bigynne werre / she
in ful humble wise / whan she saugh hir tyme / seide to
hym thise wordes [2242] ¶ My lord quod she / I yow
biseche as hertely as I dar and kan / ne haste yow nat to
faste / and for alle gerdons / as yeueth me Audience
[2243] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonce seith ¶ who so that dooth to
that oother good or harm / haste thee nat to quiten it. for
in this wise thy freend wole abyde / and thyn enemy shal
the lenger lyue in drede [2244] ¶ The prouerbe seith ! he
hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde || And in wikked haste /
is no profit
- [2245] This Melibee answerde vn to his wyf Prudence
¶ I purpose nat quod he to werke by thy conseil / for
many causes and resoñs ¶ ffor certes / euery wight wolde
holde me thanne a fool [2246] ¶ this is to seyn / If I.
for thy conseillynge wolde chaungen thynges that been
ordeyned and affirmed by so manye wyse [2247] ¶ Sec-
oundly I seye / that alle wommen been wikke / and noon
good of hem alle ¶ ffor of a thousand men seith Salomon /
I foond a good man ¹but certes of alle wommen / good
womman foond I neuere [2248] ¶ And also certes / If I
gouerned me by thy conseil / it sholde seme that I hadde
yeue to thee ouer me the maistrie / and god forbede / that
it so weere [2249] ¶ For Ihesus Syrak seith / that if the
wyf haue maistrie / she is contrarious to hir housbonde
[2250] ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ Neuere in thy lyf / to thy
wyf / ne to thy child / ne to thy freend / ne yeue no power
ouer thy self ||. ffor bettre it were / that thy children aske
of thy persone / thynges that hem nedeth / than thou be
thy self in the handes of thy children / [2251] ¶ And if I
wolde werke by thy conseillynge Certes / my conseillynge
moste som tyme be secree / til it were tyme þat it moste be

knowe and this / ne may noght be [2252. *Car il est
escript, la jonglerie des femmes ne puet riens celer fors ce
qu'elle ne voit.* [2253] *Après, le philologue dit, en mauvais
conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes : et par ces raisons
je ne dois point user de ton conseil.* MS. Eg. 19 C. vii, in
Tyrolini, iv. 335. (*See Prudence on Boasus 4 & 5, further on.*)

[2254] Whanne dame Prudence / ful debonairly and ¶ Prudence
with greet patience / hadde herd al that hir housbonde
liked for to seye / thanne axed she of hym licence for to
speke / and seyde in this wise [2255] ¶ My lord quod she /
as to youre firste reson / certes it may lightly been
answered ¶ for I seye / that it is no folie to change
conseil ¶. whan the thyng is chaunged ¶ or elles / whan
the thyng semeth / ootherweyes / than it was bifore
[2256] ¶ And mooreouer I seye / that though ye han
sworn and bihight to perfourne youre emprise ¶ And
natheles / ye weye to perfourne thilke same emprise
by iuste cause / men sholde nat seyn therfore / that ye were
a her' ne forsworn [2257] ¶ for the book seith / put the
wise man maketh no keyng' whan he turneth his corage to
the bettre [2258] ¶ And al be it so / that youre emprise be
establisshed and ordeyned / by greet multitude of folk' / yet
thar ye nat accomlice thilke ordinaunce / but yow like
[2259] ¶ for the trouthe of thynges / and the profit been
rather founden in fewe folk' that been wise and ful of
reson / than by greet multitude of folk' ther euery man
crieth and clatereth / what thar hym liketh ¶ Soothly /
swich multitude is nat honeste [2260] ¶ As to the seconde
reson / where as ye seyn put alle wommen been wikke ?
Sane youre grace / certes ye despisen alle wommen in this
wyse / [*car il est escript, qui tout desprist, a tous desplait*]
[2261] & Senec' seith / that who so wole haue sapi- ¶ Seneca
ence / shal no man despise but he shal gladly / techen the
science that he kan with-outen presumption or pride /
[2262] And swiche thynges // as he nought ne kan / he
shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquire of lasse

folk / than hym self /. [2263] And sire / that ther hath
 been many a good womman / may lightly be preued /
 [2264] ¶ ffor certes sire / oure lord Ihesu crist^t wolde
 neuere haue descended to be born of a womman / if alle
 wommen / hadden ben wikke / [2265] And after that for
 the grete bountee that is in wommen oure lord Ihesu crist^t
 whan he was risen fro deeth to lyue / appeered rather to a
 womman / than to hise Apostles [2266] ¶ And though
 that salomon seith / that he ne foond neuere womman
 good / it folweth nat therfore / that alle wommen ben
 wikke [2267] ffor though that he ne foond no good
 womman /. certes ful many another man / hath founden /
 many a womman ful good and trewe [2268] ¶ Or elles
 per auenture / the entente of salomon was this / that as in
 souereyn bounte he foond no womman / [2269] this is to
 seyn / that ther is no wight þat hath souereyn bountee /
 saue god allone / as he hym self recordeth in hys Euaun-
 gelie / [2270] ffor ther nys no creature so good / that hym
 ne wanteth somewhat of the perfeccion of god / that is his
 maker [2271] ¶ Your¹ thridde reson is this ¶ ye seyn / if
 ye gouerne yow by my conseil / it sholde seme that ye
 hadde yeue me the maistrie / and the lordshipe ouer youre
 persone ||. [2272] sire saue youre grace / it is nat so || ffor
 if it were so that no man sholde be conseilled / but oonly
 of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his persone /
 men wolden nat be conseilled so ofte || [2273] ffor soothly /
 thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos / yet hath he
 free choys / wheither he wole werke by that conseil or
 noon [2274] ¶ And as to youre fourthe resoñ ¶ ther ye
 seyn þat the Ianglerie of wommen hath hyd thynges that
 they wiste noght. As who seith / that a womman kan nat
 hyde that she woot [2275] ¶ sire thise wordes been vnder-
 stonde of wommen þat been Iangleresses and wikked /
 [2276] of whiche wommen / men seyn that thre thynges /
 dryuen a man out of his hous ¶ that is to seyn Smoke /
 droppying^t of Reyn /. and wikked wyues / [2277] and

¶ Of .iij. thynges
 þat dryuen a man
 out of his hous.

swiche wommen seith Salomon / þat it were better dwelle ¶ Salomon
 in desert than with a womman that is riotous [2278] ¶ And
 sire by youre leue / that am nat .I. / [2279] for ye haan ful
 ofte assayed my grete silence / and my gret pacience. || And
 eek how wel / that I kan hyde and hele thynges / that
 men oghte secreely to hyde [2280] ¶ And soothly / as to
 youre fifthe reson / where as ye seyn / that in wikked con-
 seil / wommen venquisshe men ¶ god woot thilke reson
 stant heere in no stede [2281] ¶ ffor vnderstood now / ye
 asken conseil to do wikkednesse / [2282] and if ye wole
 werken wikkednesse / and youre wif restreyneth thilke
 wikked purpos / and ouercometh yow by reson and by
 good conseil / [2283] certes youre wyf oghte rather to be
 preised / than yblamed [2284] ¶ Thus sholde ye vnder-
 stonde the Philosophre / that seith / In wikked conseil
 wommen venquissien hir housbondes [2285] ¶ And ther
 as ye blamen alle wommen and hir resons || I shal shewe
 yow by manye ensamples / that many a womman / hath
 ben ful good / and yet been / and hir conseils ful hoolsome
 and profitable [2286] ¶ Eek / som men han seyde that the
 conseillynge of wommen / is outhere to deere / or elles to
 litel of pris [2287] ¶ But al be it so / þat ful many a
 womman is badde / and hir conseil vile and noght worth /
 yet han men founde / ful many a good womman / and ful
 discrete and wise in conseillynge [2288] ¶ Loo Iacob / by ¶ Nota de
 good conseil of his mooder Rebekka wan the benyson of Rebekka
 Ysaak / his fader / and the lordshipe ouer alle hise bretheren
 [2289] ¶ Iudith by hire good conseil deliuered the Citee of ¶ de Iudith
 Bethulie in which she dwelled / out of the handes of
 Olofernus / that hadde it biseged and wolde haue al destroyed
 it [2290] ¶ Abygail deliuered Nabal hir housbonde fro ¶ de Abygail
 Dauid the kyng / that wolde haue slayn hym / and apayed
 the Ire of the kyng / by hir wit / and by hir good conseil-
 lyng [2291] ¶ Hester / enhaunced greetly by hir good con- ¶ de Hester
 seil the peple of god / in the regne of Assuerus the kyng
 [2292] ¶ and the same bountee in good conseillyng of

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many a good womman may men telle [2293] ¶ And moore ouer/ whan oure lord hadde creat Adam oure forme fader / he seyde in this wise / [2294] It is nat good / to been a man alloone / make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym self / [2295] ¶ Heere may ye se / that if that wommen were nat goode and hir conseils goode & profitable / [2296] oure lord god of heuene / wolde neuere han wroght hem / ne called hem / help of man but rather confusiō of man [2297] ¶ And ther seyde oones a clerk in 'two vers || what is bettre / than gold ? Iaspre ¶ What is bettre than Iaspre ? wisdom / [2298] ¶ And what is better than wisdom ? womman ||. And what is bettre than a good womman ? no thyng [2299] ¶ And sire by manye of othere resons / may ye seen that manye wommen been goode / and hir conseils goode and profitable || [2300] And therfore sire / if ye wol triste to my conseil / I shal restoore yow / youre doghter / hool and sound / [2301] And eek / .I. wol do to yow so muche / that ye shul haue honour in this cause /

¶ Melibee [2302] Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence / he seyde thus [2303] ¶ I se wel that the word of Salomon is sooth ||. he seith that wordes þat been spoken discretly by ordinaunce / been honycombes / for they yeuen swetnesse to the soule / and hoolsomnesse to the body [2304] ¶ And wyf / by cause of thy sweete wordes / and eek for I haue assayed and preued thy grete sapience / and thy grete trouthe / I wol gouerne me by thy conseil / in alle thyng /

¶ Prudence [2305] Now sire quod dame Prudence / and syn ye vouche sauf / to been gouerned by my conseil / I wol enforme yow / how ye shul gouerne youre self / in chesynge of youre conseilours [2306] ¶ Ye shul first / in alle youre werkes / mekely / biseken to the heighe god / þat he wol be youre conseilour /. [2307] And shapeth yow / to swich entente / that he yeue yow conseil and confort as taughte

¶ Thobias Thobie his sone [2308] ¶ At alle tymes / thou shalt blesse

god and praye hym / to dresse thy weyes / and looke / þat
 alle thy conseils been in hym for eueremoore [2309] Seint
 Iame eek^t seith ||. If any of yow haue nede of sapience / axe
 it of god [2310] ¶ And afterward / thanne shul ye taken
 conseil of youre [self] and examyne wel youre thoghtes / of
 swich thyng^t as yow thynketh þat is best for youre profit /
 [2311] And thanne shul ye dryue fro youre herte. thre
 thynges that been contrariouse to good conseil / [2312]
 That is to seyn / Ire / coueitise / and hastifnesse

¶ Sanctus
Iacobus

¶ Of .iiij. thynges
þat been contra-
riouse to good
conseil

[2313] ¶ first^t he þat axeth conseil of hym self / *certes* /
 he moste been with-outen Ire / for manye causes / [2314]
 the firste is this ¶ he þat hath greet Ire and wratthe in
 hym self / he wenep alwey that he may do thyng^t that he
 may nat do [2315] ¶ And secoundely / he that is Irous
 and wrooth / he ne may nat wel deme / [2316] and he
 þat may nat wel deme / may nat wel conseil [2317] ¶ The
 thridde is this / that he þat is Irous and wrooth as seith
 Senec^t ne may nat speke / but he blame thynges / [2318]
 and with hise viciouse wordes / he stireth oother folk / to
 Angre and to Ire [2319] ¶ And eek sire / ye moste dryue
 coueitise out of youre herte / [2320] for the Apostol seith
 ¶ That coueitise is roote of alle harmes || [2321] And trust^t
 wel / that a coueitous man ne kan noght deme ne thynke /
 but oonly to fulfille the ende of his coueitise / [2322] and
certes / that ne may neuere been accompliced / for euere /
 the moore habundaunce þat he hath of richesse / the moore
 he desireth [2323] ¶ And sire / ye moste also / dryue out
 of youre herte hastifnesse / for *certes* / [2324] ye ne may
 nat deeme for the beste a sodeyn thought / that falleth in
 youre herte / but ye moste auyse yow on it^t ful ofte /
 [2325] for as ye herde biforn / The *commune prouerbe* is
 this ¶ That he þat soone deemeth / soone repenteth.

¶ Seneca

¶ Apostolus

[2326] ¶ Sire / ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicion
 [2327] for *certes* / som thyng^t þat somtyme semeth to
 yow / that it^t is good for to do / Another tyme it semeth
 to yow the contrarie /

¶ Ihesus
Syrak /

¶ Seneca

¶ How a man
shall tellen his
conseil

[2328] whan ye han taken conseil of youre self / and
 han deemed by good deliberacion swich thyng / as you list
 best / [2329] ¶ Thanne rede I yow / that ye kepe it /
 'secre / [2330] biwrey nat youre conseil to no persone /
 but if so be that ye wenen sikerly / that thurgh youre
 biwreyng^t youre condicion / shal be to yow the moore
 profitable [2331] ¶ ffor Ihesus Syrak seith / Neither to thy
 foo ne to thy frend^t discouere nat thy secree ne thy folie /
 [2332] for they wol yeue yow Audiance and lookynge / to
 supportacion in thy presence / and scorne thee in thyn
 Absence [2333] ¶ Another clerk^t seith / That scarsly shaltou
 fynden any persone / that may kepe conseil sikerly
 [2334] ¶ The book seith / whil þat thou kepest thy conseil
 in thyn herte / thou kepest it in thy prisoñ / [2335] and
 whan thou biwreyest^t thy conseil to any wight / he holdeth
 thee in his snare [2336] ¶ And therfore yow is bettre to
 hyde youre conseil in youre herte / than praye hem / to
 whom ye han biwreyed youre conseil / that he wole kepen
 it cloos and stille [2337] ¶ ffor Seneca seith ¶ If so be /
 þat thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde^s how
 darstou prayen any oother wight^t thy conseil sikerly to
 kepe [2338] ¶ But natheles / If thou wene sikerly / þat
 the biwreying^t of thy conseil to a persone / wol make thy
 condicion to stonden in the bettre plyt / thanne shaltou
 tellen hym thy conseil in this wise [2339] ¶ first^t thou
 shalt make no semblant^t wheither thee were leuere pees or
 werre / or this / or that^t. ne shewe hym nat thy wille and
 thyn entente / [2340] ffor trust wel / þat comenli these
 conseillours been flatereres / [2341] namely the conseillours
 of grete lordes / [2342] for they enforcen hem alwey /
 rather to speken plesante wordes / enclynynge to the lordes
 lust^t. than wordes þat been trewe or profitable [2343] ¶ And
 therfore / men seyn / þat the riche man hath seeld good con-
 seil but if^t he haue it of hym self^t [2344] ¶ And after that
 thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys ||
 [2345] And as touchynge thy freendes thou shalt con-

sidere / wiche of hem / þat been moost feithful and moost
 wise / and eldest and most approued in conseillyng.
 [2346] And of hem shalt thou aske thy conseil / as the
 caas requireth

[2347] ¶ I seye / þat first / ye shul clepe to youre con-
 seil youre freendes that been trewe [2348] ¶ ffor Salomon ¶ Salomon
 seith ¶ That right as the herte of a man deliteth in sauour
 þat is soote / right so / the conseil of trewe freendes /
 yeueth swetenesse to the soule. [2349] He seith also ¶ ther
 may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend || [2350] for
 certes gold ne siluer / beth nat so muche worth as the
 goode wyl of a trewe freend [2351] ¶ And eek he seith /
 that a trewe freend / is a strong deffense / who so þat
 hym fyndeth / certes / he fyndeth a greet tresour
 [2352] ¶ Thanne shul ye eek considere / if that youre
 trewe freendes / been discrete and wise / ¶ ffor the book
 seith / Axe alwey thy conseil / of hem þat been wise /
 [2353] And by this same resoñ / shul ye clepen to youre
 conseil of youre freendes that been of age / swiche as han
 seyn and been expert in manye thynges / and been
 approued in conseillynges [2354] ¶ ffor the book seith /
 that in the olde men is the Sapience / and in longe tyme
 the prudence [2355] ¶ And Tullius seith / that grete
 thynges / ne been nat ay accompliced by strengthe / ne by
 deliuerneße of body / but by good conseil / by Auctoritee
 of persones and by science / the whiche thre thynges / ne
 been nat fieble by age / but certes / they enforcen and en-
 creescen day by day / [2356] And thanne / shul ye kepe
 this / for a general reule ¶ first shul ye clepen to youre
 conseil / a fewe of youre freendes that been especiale /
 [2357] for Salomon seith ¶ Manye freendes haue thou / ¶ Nota
 secundum
 Salomoneu
 but among a thousand chese thee oon / to be thy conseil-
 lour / [2358] ffor al be it so / that thou first ne¹ telle thy
 conseil / but to a fewe / thou mayst afterward telle it to
 mo folk if it be nede / [2359] but looke alwey / that thy
 conseilours / haue thilke thre condicioñs þat I haue seyð

bifore / that is to seyn / that they be trewe / wise / and
 of oold experience [2360] ¶ And werke nat alwey in euery
 nede / by oon counsellour allone ¶ ffor somtyme bihououeth
 ¶ Salomon it to been counselled by manye || [2361] ffor Salomon seith
 ¶ Saluacion of thynges / is / where as ther been manye
 counsellours

[2362] Now / sith I haue toold yow / of which folk /
 ye sholde been counselled / now wol I teche yow which
 conseil / ye oghte to eschewe [2363] ¶ ffirst ye shul eschue
 ¶ Salomon the conseillyng of fooles || ffor Salomon seith / taak' no con-
 seil of a fool / for he ne kan noght conseil / but after his
 ¶ Of counsellours owene lust' and his affeccioñ [2364] ¶ The book seith /
 ¶ pat a man oghte to eschue that the propretee of a fool is this ¶ he troweth lightly
 harm of euery wight / and lightly troweth alle bountee in
 hym self [2365] ¶ Thou shalt eek eschue / the conseillyng'
 of flatereres / swiche as enforcen hem / rather to preise
 youre persone by flaterye than for to telle yow / the sooth-
 fastnesse of thynges

¶ Tullius [2366] ¶ Wherfore Tullius seith ¶ Amonges alle the
 pestilences that been in freendshipe / the gretteste is
 flaterie / And therfore is it moore nede þat thou eschue
 and drede flatereres / than any oother peple [2367] ¶ The
 book seith / thou shalt rather drede and flee / fro the
 sweete wordes / of flaterynge preiseres / than fro the egre
 wordes of thy freend / that seith thee thy sothes || [2368]
 Salomon seith / that the wordes of a flaterere / is a snare
 to chacche with Innocentz [2369] ¶ He seith also / that he
 þat speketh to his freend / wordes of swetnesse and of
 plesaunce / setteth a net biforn his feet to cacche hym
 [2370] ¶ And therfore seith Tullius / Encline nat thyne
 eres to flatereres / ne taaketh no conseil of the wordes of
 ¶ Cato flaterye ||. [2371] And Caton seith ¶ Auyse thee wel / and
 eschue the wordes / of swetnesse and of plesaunce
 [2372] ¶ And eek thou shalt eschue / the conseillyng'
 of thyne olde enemys / that been reconciled [2373] ¶ The
 book seith / that no wight retourneth sauflly / in-to the

grace of his olde enemy [2374] ¶ And Isope seith / Ne
 trust nat to hem / to whiche thou hast had som tyme werre
 or enemytee / ne telle hem nat thy conseil [2375] ¶ And
 Seneca telleth the cause why ¶ It may nat be seith he / ¶ Seneca
 that where greet fyr / hath longe tyme endured / that
 ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse [2376] And
 therefore seith Salomon ¶ In thyn olde foo trust neuere ¶ Salomon
 [2377] ¶ ffor sikerly / though thyn enemy / be reconciled
 and maketh thee chiere of humylitee / and lowteth to thee
 with his heed ne trust hym neuere [2378] ¶ ffor certes /
 he maketh thilke feyned humilitee / moore for his profit
 than for any loue of thy persone / by cause that he deem-
 eth / to haue victorie ouer thy persone / by swich feyned
 contenance / the which victorie / he myghte nat wyne / by
 strif or werre [2379] And Peter Alfonse seith /. Make no
 felawshipe / with thyne olde enemys ¶ ffor if thou do hem
 bountee / they wol peruerten it / in to wikkednesse
 [2380] And eek thou most eschue / the conseillyng of hem /
 that been thy seruantz and beren thee greet reuerence / for
 perauenture / they doon it moore / for drede than for loue
 [2381] ¶ And therefore / seith a Philosophre / in this ¶ Philosophus
 wise ¶. Ther is no wight parfitly trewe / to hym þat he to
 soore dredeth [2382] ¶ And Tullius seith ¶ Ther nys no ¶ Tullius
 myght so greet of any Emperour / that longe may endure /
 but if he haue / moore lo'ue of the peple / than for drede
 [2383] ¶ Thou shalt also eschue / the conseiling of folk
 that been dronkelewe ¶ for they kan no conseil hyde
 [2384] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ¶ Ther is no priuete / ther as ¶ Salomon
 regneth dronkenesse [2385] ¶ Ye shul also / han in suspect
 the conseillyng of swich folk. as conseilte yow. a thyng
 priuely / and conseilte yow / the contrarie openly [2386]
 ¶ ffor Cassidorie seith /. that it is a manere sleighte to ¶ Cassidornus
 hyndre / whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly / and
 werketh priuely the contrarie [2387] ¶ Thou shalt also /
 haue in suspect. the conseillyng of wikked folk ¶. ffor the
 book seith / The conseillyng of wikked folk. is alwey ful

¶ David

of fraude ||. [2388] And David seith ¶ blisful is that man /
þat hath nat folwed / the conseilyng^t of sherewes [2389]
¶ Thou shalt also eschue / the conseillyng^t of yong^t folk.
for hir conseil is nat rype

¶ how a man
shal examine his
conseillours after
the doctrine of
Tullius

[2390] NOW sire / sith I have shewed yow / of which
folk^t ye shul take youre conseil / and of which folk^t ye shul
folwe the conseil ^s [2391] now wol I teche yow / how ye
shal examyne youre conseil / after the doctrine of Tullius
[2392] ¶ In the examynynge thanne of youre conseillour^t
ye shul considere manye thynges [2393] ¶ Alderfirst^t thou
shalt considere / þat in thilke thyng^t that thou purposest /
and vpon what thyng^t thou wolt^t haue conseil / þat verray
trouthe / be seyde and conserued / this is to seyn / telle
trewely thy tale [2394] ¶ ffor he that seith fals / may nat
wel be counselled^t / in that cas of which he lieth [2395]
¶ And after this / thou shalt considere the thynges þat
acorden to that thou purpousest / for to do / by thy conseil-
lours if resoñ accorde therto /. [2396] And eek / if thy
myght may atteine ther-to / And if the moore part^t and the
bette part^t of thy conseillours acorde ther-to / or noon
[2397] ¶ Thanne shaltou considere / what thyng shal
folwe / after hir conseillyng^t. as hate / pees / werre /
grace / profit^t or damage / and manye othere thynges
[2398] ¶ Thanne / of alle thise thynges / thou shalt chese
the beste / and weyue alle othere thynges [2399] ¶ Thanne
shaltow considere of what roote is engendred^t the matiere
of thy conseil / and what fruyt^t it may conserue and
engendre [2400] ¶ Thou shalt eek considere alle thise
causes / fro whennes they been sprongen [2401] ¶ And
whan ye han examyned youre conseil / as I have seyde /
and which partie is the bettre and moore profitable / and
hast approued it^t by manye wise folk^t and olde [2402]
¶ thanne shaltou considere / it thou mayst parfourne it^t and
maken of it a good ende [2403] ¶ ffor certes resoñ wol nat
that any man / sholde bigynne a thyng^t. but if he myghte /
parfourne it^t as hym oghte [2404] ¶ Ne no wight^t sholde

take vp on hym so heuy a charge / that he myghite nat bere
 it [2405] ¶ ffor the prouerbe seith ||. he that to muche ¶ prouerbe
 embraceth / distreyneth litel [2406] And Cato seith ¶ Cato
 ¶ Assay to do swich thyng^t. as thou hast power to doon /
 lest^t that the charge oppresse thee / so soore / that thee
 bihoueth / to weyue thyng^t that thou hast bigonne /
 [2407] And if so be / þat thou be in doute / wheither thou
 mayst^t parfourne a thing^t or noon / chese rather / to suffre
 than bigynne [2408] ¶ And Piers Alphonse seith ¶ If ¶ Petrus Alfonce
 thou hast myght to doon a thyng^t of which thou most
 repente thee / it is bettre / nay than ye [2409] ¶ this is
 to seyn / that thee is bettre / holde thy tonge stille / than
 for to speke [2410] ¶ Thanne may ye vnderstonde / by
 strengre resons / that if thou hast po^twer / to parfourne a
 werk^t of which thou shalt repente / thanne is it bettre /
 that thou suffre than bigynne [2411] ¶ wel seyn they þat
 defenden euery wight^t to assaye any thyng^t of which he is
 in doute / wheither he may parfourne it or noon || [2412]
 And after / whan ye han examyned youre conseil / as I
 haue seyð biforn / and knowen wel / that ye may par-
 fourne youre emprise / conferme it thanne sadly til it be at
 an ende

[2413] NOW is it resoñ and tyme þat I shewe yow /
 whanne and wherfore / that ye may chaunge youre conseil-
 lours / with-outen youre repreue [2414] ¶ Soothly / a man ¶ How a man
 may chaungen his purpos and his conseil if the cause hisse conseilours
 cesseth / or whan a newe caas bitydeth [2415] ¶ ffor the with-outen
 lawe seith that vpon thynges þat newly bityden / bihoueth repreue
 newe conseil [2416] ¶ And senec/ seith ||. If thy conseil ¶ Seneca
 is comen / to the eeris of thyn enemy chaunge thy conseil
 [2417] ¶ Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil / If so be /
 that thou mayst fynde / that by errour / or by oother
 cause / harm or damage may bityde [2418] ¶ Also / if thy
 conseil be dishonest^t. or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause /
 chaunge thy conseil ||. [2419] ffor the lawes seyn ¶ that
 alle bihestes that been dishoneste / been of no value

[2420] ¶ And eek/ If so be / þat it be impossible / or may
nat goodly be parfourned or kept

[2421] ¶ And take this / for a general reule / that euery
conseil þat is affermed so strongly / that it may nat be
chaunged for no condicioñ that may bityde ¶ I seye / þat
thilke conseil is wikkeð. [2422]

¶ Melibeus

This Melibeus / whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of
his wyf dame Prudence / answerde in this wyse
[2423] ¶ Dame quod he as yet in to this tyme / ye
han wel and couenablely taught me as in general / how I
shal gouerne me in the chesyng / and in the withholdyng
of my conseilours || [2424] but now wolde I fayn / that
ye wolde condescende in especial / [2425] and telle me /
how liketh yow / or what semeth yow by oure conseilours /
that we han chosen in oure present nede

¶ Prudence

[2426] My lord quod she / I biseke yow in al hum-
blesse / that ye wol nat wilfully replie agayn my resofis /
ne distempre youre herte / thogh I speke thyng that yow
displese || [2427] ffor god woot that as in myn entente I
speke it for youre beste / for youre honour / and for youre
profite eke / [2428] And soothly I hope / that youre be-
nyngnytee / wol taken it in pacience [2429] ¶ Trusteth me
wel quod she / that youre conseil as in this caas ne sholde
nat as to speke properly / be called a conseillyng but a
mocioñ or a moeuyng of folye / [2430] in which conseil /
ye han erred in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ first / and forward / ye han erred in thasse-
mlyng of youre conseilours || [2432] ffor ye sholde first
haue cleped a fewe folk / to youre conseil / and after ye
myghte han shewed it to mo folk / if it hadde been nede
[2433] ¶ But certes / ye han sodeynly cleped to youre con-
seil a greet multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful
anoyous for to heere [2434] ¶ Also / ye han erred / for
there as ye sholden oonly haue cleped to youre conseil
youre trewe frendes olde and wise / [2435] ye han ycleped
straunge folk / and yong folk. false flatereres / and enemys

reconsiled / and folk / þat doon yow reuerence withouten
loue [2436] ¶ And eek also / ye haue erred / for ye han
brought with yow to youre conseil / Ire / conceitise / and
hastifnesse / [2437] the whiche thre thinges been con-
trariouse to eury conseil / honeste and profitable / [2438]
the whiche thre / ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem /
neither in youre self ne in youre conseilours as yow oghte
[2439] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye han shewed¹ to youre
conseillours / youre talent^t and youre affeccion / to make
werre anon / and for to do vengeance / [2440] they han
espied by youre wordes to what thyng^t ye been enclyned ||
[2441] And therefore / han they rather conseilled yow to
your talent^t than to youre profit^t [2442] ¶ Ye han erred
also / for it semeth / þat it suffiseth / to han been con-
seilled by thise conseilours oonly / and wip litel Auy^s /
[2443] where-as in so greet^t and so heigh a nede / it hadde
been necessarie mo conseilours / and moore deliberacion to
parfourne youre emprise [2444] ¶ Ye han erred also / for
ye han nat examyned youre conseil / in the forseyde
manere ne in due manere as the caas requireth [2445] ¶ Ye
han erred also / for ye han nat maked no diuisionⁿ bitwixe
your conseilours ¶ this is to seyn / bitwixen youre trewe
freendes / and youre feyned conseilours^t [2446] ne ye han
nat knowe the wil of youre trewe freendes / olde and wise
[2447] but ye han cast^t alle hire wordes in an hochepot^t
and enclyned youre herte to the moore partie / and to the
gretter nombre / and there been ye condescended [2448]
¶ And sith ye woot wel þat men shal alwey / fynde a
gretter nombre of fooles / than of wise men / [2449] and
therefore / the conseils that been at congregacioⁿs and mul-
titudes of folk^t. there as men take moore reward^t to the
nombre / than to the sapience of persones / [2450] ye se wel /
that in swiche conseillynges / fooles han the maistrie [2451]
Melibeus answerde agayn / and seyde / I graunte wel that ¶ **Melibeus**
I haue erred || [2452] but there as thou hast toold me heer-
biforn / þat he nys nat to blame þat chaungeth hise con-

seillours in certain caas / and for certeine Iuste causes
 [2453] ¶ I am al redy to chaunge my conseilours / right
 ¶ Prouerbe as thow wolt deuyse / [2454] ¶ The prouerbe seith /. that
 for to do synne is mannyssh / but certes / for to perseuere
 longe in synne / is werk of the deuyl

¶ Prudence [2455] ¶ To this sentence answereth anon dame Pru-
 dence and seyde [2456] ¶ Examineth quod she youre con-
 seil / and lat vs see / the whiche of hem / han spoken
 most resonably / and taught yow best conseil ||. [2457]
 And for as muche as þat the examynacion is necessarie /
 lat vs bigynne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens / that
 first speeken in this matiere [2458] ¶ I sey yow / that the
 surgiens and phisiciens / han seyde yow in youre conseil
 discretely / as hem oughte [2459] ¶ And in hir speche
 seyde ful wisely / that to the office of hem aperteneth to
 doon to euery wight honour and profit / and no wight for
 to anoye / [2460] and in hir craft / to doon greet diligence
 vn-to the cure of hem / whiche þat they han in hir gouern-
 aunce / [2461] And sire / right as they han answered
 wisely and discretely / [2462] right so rede I that they
 been heighly and souereynly gerdoned for hir noble
 speche / [2463] and eek for they sholde do / the moore
 ententif bisynesse in the curacion of youre doghter deere ||
 [2464] ffor al be it so / þat they been youre freendes /
 therfore shal ye nat suffren / that they serue yow for
 noght / [2465] but ye oghte the rather gerdone hem and
 shewe hem youre largesse [2466] ¶ And as touchynge the
 proposicion which that the Phisiciens encreesceden in this
 caas / this is to seyn / [2467] that in maladies / that oon
 contrarie is warissed by another contrarie /. [2468] I
 wolde fayn knowe / hou ye vnderstonde this text / and
 what is youre sentence [2469] ¶ Certes quod Melibeus / I.
 vnderstonde it in this wise [2470] ¶ that right as they han
 doon me a contrarie / right so / sholde I doon hem another ||
 [2471] ffor right as they han ¹vengeed hem on me / and
 doon me wrong! Right so / shal I venge me vpon hem /

¶ Melibeus

and doon hem wrong'. [2472] and thanne haue I cured oon
contrarie by another

[2473] Lo. lo quod dame Prudence / how lightly is ¶ Prudence
every man enclined to his owene desir / and to his owene
plesaunce [2474] ¶ Certes quod she the wordes of the
Phisiciens / ne sholde nat han been vnderstonden in thys
wise ||. [2475] ffor *certes* / wikkednesse / is nat contrarie
to wikkednesse / ne vengeance to vengeance / ne wrong'
to wrong' but they been semblable [2476] ¶ And ther-
fore / o vengeance / is nat warissed by another venge-
aunce / ne o wroong' by another wroong'. [2477] but
euerich of hem encreesceth and aggreggeth oother [2478]
¶ But *certes* / the wordes of the Phisiciens / sholde been
vnderstonden in this wise [2479] ¶ ffor good and wikked-
nesse / been two contraries and pees and werre / venge-
aunce and suffraunce / discord and accord and manye
othere thynges || [2480] But *certes* / wikkednesse / shal be
warissed by goodnesse / discord by accord / werre by pees /
and so forth of othere thynges [2481] And heer-to accordeth
Seint Paul the Apostle / in manye places [2482] ¶ He
seith Ne yeldeth nat harm for harm / ne wikked speche /
for wikked speche / [2483] But do wel / to hym þat dooth
thee harm / and blesse hym þat seith to thee harm [2484]
¶ And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and
accord [2485] ¶ But now wol I speke to yow / of the con-
seil / which þat was yeuen to yow / by the men of lawe /
and the wise folk' [2486] that seyden alle by oon accord /
as ye han herd bfore [2487] ¶ That ouer alle thynges / ye
sholde doon youre diligence to kepen youre persone / and
to warnestoore youre hous [2488] ¶ And seyden also that
in this caas / yow oghen for to werken ful auyself and
with greet deliberacion [2489] ¶ And sire / as to the firste
point. that toucheth to the kepyng of youre persone /
[2490] ye shul vnderstonde / that he þat hath werre shal
eueremoore / mekely and deuoutly / preyen biforn alle
thynges / [2491] that *Ihesus* crist of his grete mercy wol

¶ Paulus Apostolus

han hym in his proteccion / and been his souereyn helpyng
 at his nede ||. [2492] ffor *certes* / In this world ther is no
 wight that may be conseilLED ne kept sufficeantly with-
 outen the keypyng of oure lord Ihesu crist [2493] ¶ To this
 ¶ David prophete sentence accordeth the prophete dauid / that seith || [2494]
 If god ne kepe the Citee / in ydel waketh he that it kepeth
 [2495] Now sire / thanne shul ye committe / the keypyng of
 youre persone to youre trewe freendes / that been approued
 and knowe / [2496] and of hem / shul ye axen helpe / youre
 ¶ Cato persone for to kepe ¶ ffor Catoñ seith ¶ If thou hast
 nede of help / axe it of thy freendes || [2497] ffor ther nys
 noon so good a Phisicien / as thy trewe freend [2498]
 ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle
 straunge folk / and fro lyeres / and haue alwey in suspect
 ¶ Petrus Alfonse hire compaignye [2499] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonse seith || Ne
 taak / no compaignye by the weye of straunge men but if
 so be þat thou haue knowe hym of a lenger tyme [2500]
 ¶ And if so be / that he be falle in-to thy compaignye par-
 aventure withouten thyn assent. / [2501] enquire thanne /
 as subtilly as thou mayst of his conuersacion / and of his lyf
 bifore / and feyne thy wey ||. seye that thou goost thider
 as thou wolt nat go / [2502] and if he bereth a spere /
 hoold thee on the right syde / and if he bere a swerd /
 hoold thee on his left syde. [2503] ¶ And after this /
 thanne / shul ye kepe yow wisely from all swich manere
 peple as I haue seyde bifore / And hem and hir conseil
 eschewe / [2504] ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow
 in swich manere / [2505] that for any *presumpcion* of youre
 strengthe / that ye ne dispise nat ne accounte nat the
 myght of youre Aduersarie / so litel / that ye lete / the
 keypyng of youre persone / for youre *presumpcion* / [2506]
 for euery wys man / dredeth his enemy [2507] ¶ And
 ¶ Salomon Salomon seith ¶ weleful is he / that of alle hath drede /
 [2508] for *certes* / he that thurgh the hardynesse of his
 herte / and thurgh the hardynesse of hym self / hath to
 greet *presumpcion* / hym shal yuel bityde [2509] ¶ Thanne /

shul ye eueremoore countrewayte embussliementz and alle
 espiaille [2510] ¶ ffor senec^e seith ¶ That the wise man / ¶ Seneca
 he dredeth harmes / [. . . no gap] [2511] ne he ne
 falleth in-to perils / that perils eschueth || [2512] And al
 be it so / þat it seme that thou art in siker place / yet
 shaltow alwey do thy diligence in kepyng of thy persone
 [2513] ¶ this is to seyn Ne be nat necligent^e to kepe thy
 persone / nat oonly / for thy gretteste enemys / but for thy
 leeste enemy [2514] [*Car senegue dit il appartient a homme*
bien enseigne qui[1] *double son petit ennemy*'] [2515] ¶ Ouyde
 seith || that the litel wesele / wol slee the grete bole / and the
 wilde hert^e [2516] ¶ And the book / seith || A litel thorn /
 may prikke a greet kyng ful soore ||. And an hound / wol
 holde the wilde boor [2517] ¶ But natheles / I sey nat^e
 thou shalt be coward^e / that thou doute / ther / wher as is no
 drede [2518] ¶ The book seith / that somme folk^e. han
 greet^e lust to deceyue / but yet^e they dreden hem to be de-
 ceuyed [2519] ¶ Yet shaltou drede / to been empoisoned^e
 And kepe yow / from the compaignye of Scorneres [2520]
 ¶ ffor the book seith^e with scorneres make no compaignye /
 but flee hire wordes as venym

¶ Ouidius
 [1 MS Reg. 19 C
 vii. leaf 133.]

[2521] ¶ Now as to the seconde point^e ¶ Where as youre
 wise conseilours counselled yow to warnestoore youre hous /
 with greet^e diligence [2522] ¶ .I. wolde fayn knowe / how that
 ye vnderstonde / thilke wordes / and what is youre sentence

[2523] Melibeus answerde and seyde ¶ Certes I vnder-
 stande it in this wise ¶ That I shal warnestoore myn hous /
 with toures / swiche as han Castelles / and othere manere
 edifices / and Armure and Artelries / [2524] by whiche
 thynges / I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and
 deffenden that myne enemys / shul been in drede / myn
 hous for to Approche

¶ Melibeus

[2525] TO this sentence / answerde anon Prudence ||
 Warnestooryng^e quod she of heighe toures and of grete
 edifices / [*appartient aucunes fois à orgueil.* [2526] *L'en fait*
les tours et les grans édifices (Le Ménagier, i. 209)] with grete

¶ Prudence

¶ *Note* / of the
strongeste garny-
sons that may be.

costages and with greet trauaille / and whan that they been
accomplished / yet be they nat worth a stree / but if they be
defended by trewe freendes that been / olde and wise [2527]

¶ Tullius

¶ And vnderstoond wel / that the gretteste and strongeste
garnyson / that a riche man may haue / as wel to kepen his
persone as hise goodes: is / [2528] that he be biloued /
amonges hys subgetz and with hise neighbores [2529] ¶ ffor
thus seith Tullius ¶ That ther is a manere garnyson / that
no man may venquysse ne disconfite / and that is / [2530]
a lord to be biloued of hise Citezeins / and of his peple

¶ Tullius

[2531] **N**OW sire / as to the thridde point. where as
youre olde / and wise conseilours seyden ¶ That yow ne
oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede /
[2532] but that yow oghte purueyen and apparailen yow
in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacion
[2533] ¶ trewely / I trowe that they seyden right wisely
and right sooth [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius seith / In euery
nede / er thou bigynne it / Apparaille thee with greet
diligence [2535] ¶ Thanne seye I / that in vengeance
takyng In werre / in bataille / and in warnestoor yng
[2536] er thou bigynne / .I. rede / þat thou apparaille thee
ther to / and do it with greet deliberacion: [2537] ¶ ffor

¶ Tullius

¶ Cassidorus

Tullius seith ¶ The longe apparaillyng biforn the bataille /
maketh short victorie ||. [2538] And Cassidorus seith ¶ The
garnyson is stronger / whan it is longe tyme auyse.

[2539] **B**ut now lat vs speken / of the conseil that was
accorded by youre neighbores / swiche as doon yow
reuerence withouten loue / [2540] youre olde enemys recon-
siled / youre flatereres / [2541] that conseilled yow cer-
teyne thynges priuely / and openly / conseilleden yow the
contrarie [2542] ¶ The yonge folk also / that conseilleden
yow to venge yow / and make werre anon [2543] ¶ And
certes sire / as I haue seyde biforn / ye han greetly erred /
to han cleped / swich manere folk to youre conseil / [2544]
which conseilours been ynogh repreued by the resoñs
aforeseyd / [2545] but natheles / lat vs now descende to

the special ¶ Ye shuln first procede / after the doctrine of
 Tullius [2546] ¶ Certes / the trouthe of this matiere / or of
 this conseil / nedeth nat̃ diligently enquire / [2547] for it
 is wel wist̃ whiche they been / that han doon to yow this
 trespas and vileynye / [2548] and how manye trespassours
 and in what manere / they han to yow doon / al this
 wrong̃ and all this vileynye [2549] ¶ And after this
 thanne / shul ye examyne the seconde condicion / which
 that the same Tullius / addeth in this matiere [2550] ¶ ffor
 Tullius put a thyng̃. which that he clepeth consentynge / this
 is to seyn ||. [2551] who been they and how manye / [*Et quelx
 ilz sont*] that consenten to thy conseil / in thy wilfulnesse /
 to doon hastif vengeance [2552] ¶ And lat vs considere
 also who been they and how manye been they / and whiche
 been they / that consenteden to youre Aduersaries [2553]
 ¶ And certes / as to the firste poynt̃ It is wel knowen / whiche
 folk̃ been they / that consenteden / to youre hastif wilful-
 nesse / [2554] for trewely / alle tho that conseilleden yow /
 to maken sodeyn werre / ne been nat̃ youre freendes [2555]
 ¶ Lat vs now considere / whiche been they / that ye holde
 so greetly youre freendes as to youre persone || [2556] ffor
 al be it so / that ye be myghty and riche / certes / ye ne
 been nat̃ but allone / [2557] for certes / ye ne han no child
 but a doghter / [2558] ne ye ne han bretheren ne cosyns
 germenys / ne noon ooper neigh kynrede / [2559] wherfore
 that youre enemys for drede sholde stinte / to plede with
 yow / or to destroye youre persone [2560] ¶ Ye knowen
 also that youre richesces / mooten been dispended / in
 diuerse parties / [2561] and whan þat euery wight̃ hath
 his part̃. they ne wollen taken but litel reward̃ to v[e]nge
 thy deeth ||. [2562] But thyne enemys / been thre / and
 they han manie children / bretheren / cosyns / and oother ny
 kynrede / [2563] And though̃ so were that thou haddest
 slayn of hem .ij. or .iiij. yet dwellen ther ynowe to wreken
 hir deeth / and to sle thy persone ||. [2564] And though̃ so
 be that̃ youre kynrede be moore siker and stedefast̃. than

the kyn of youre aduersarie || [2565] yet natheles youre kynrede / nys but a fer kynrede / they been / but lital syb to yow / [2566] and the kyn of youre enemys been ny syb to hem / And certes / as in that hir condicioñ / is bet than youres [2567] ¶ Thanne / lat vs considere also / if the conseillyng of hem þat conseilleden yow / to taken sodeyn vengeance / wheither it accorde to resoñ : [2568] And certes / ye knowe wel nay || [2569] for as by right and resoñ / ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight / but the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccioñ of it [2570] whan it is graunted hym / to take thilke vengeance hastily or attempely as the lawe requireth [2571] ¶ And yet moore ouer / of thilke word / that Tullius clepeth consentynge /. [2572] thou shalt considere / if thy myght and thy power / may consenten and suffise / to thy wilfulnesse / and to thy conseilours : [2573] And certes / thou mayst wel seyn / that nay [2574] ¶ ffor sikerly / as for to speke proprely / we may do no thyng. but only swich thyng as we may doon rightfully : [2575] And certes rightfully ne mowe ye take no vengeance / as of youre propre Auctoritee [2576] ¶ thanne mowe ye seen / that youre power ne consenteth nat ne accordeth nat with youre wilfulnesse [2577] ¶ Lat vs now examyne the thridde point that Tullius clepeth Consequent [2578] ¶ Thou shalt vnderstonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take / is the consequent ||. [2579] And ther-of / folweth another vengeance / peril / and werre / and othere damages with-oute nombre / of whiche / we be nat war / as at this tyme [2580] ¶ And as touchynge the fourthe point. that Tullius clepeth engendrynge : [2581] thou shalt considere / that this wrong which that is doon to thee / is engendred of the hate of thyne enemys / [2582] and of the vengeance takynge / vpon that wolde engendre another vengeance / and muchel sorwe and wastynge of riches as I seyde

[2583] ¶ Now sire / as to the point that Tullius clepeth causes / which that is the laste point. [2584] thou

shalt vnderstonde / þat the wrong^t that thou hast receyued /
 hath *certeine* causes / [2585] whiche þat clerkes clepen
Oriens and *Efficiens* / and *Causa longinqua* / and *Causa*
propinqua /. this is to seyn / the fer cause and the ny
 cause [2586] ¶ The fer cause / is almyghty god / that is
 cause of alle thynges [2587] ¶ The neer cause / is thy
 thre enemys [2588] ¶ The cause *Accidental* / was hate
 [2589] ¶ The cause *material* / been the fyue woundes of
 thy doghter [2590] ¶ The cause *formal* / is the manere of
 hir werkynge that broghten laddres and cloumben in at
 thy wyndowes : [2591] The cause *final* / was for to sle thy
 doghter / It letted nat^r in as muche as in hem was [2592]
 ¶ But for to speken of the fer cause / as to what ende they
 shul come / or what shal finally bityde of hem in this
 caas / ne kan .I. nat deme ||. but by coniectynge and by
 supposynge [2593] ¶ for we shul suppose / that they shul
 come to a wikked ende /. [2594] by cause / that the book^t
 of decrees seith ||. seelden or with greet payne / been causes
 ybroght / to good ende / whanne they been baddely bigonne

¶ In libro decre-
taliū

[2595] ¶ Now sire / If men wolde axe me / why that
 god suffred men to do yow this vileynye : Certes / I kan
 nat wel answere / as for no soothfastnesse [2596] ¶ ffor
 thapostle seith / that the sciences and the Iuggementz of
 oure lord god almyghty been ful depe / [2597] ther may
 no man *comprehende* ne *serchen* hem suffisantly / [2598]
 ¶ Natheles / by *certeyne* *presumpcions* and *coniectynges* /
 I holde and bileue [2599] that god / which that is ful of
 Iustice and of rightwisnesse hath suffred this bityde by
 Iuste cause resonable ||.

¶ Apostolus

[2600] Thy name is Melibee / this is to seyn / a man
 that drynketh hony [2601] ¶ Thou hast ydronke so muchel
 hony of sweete temporeel riches / and delices and hon-
 ours of this world / [2602] that thou art dronken / and
 hast forgeten / Ihesu crist^t thy creatour / [2603] thou ne
 hast nat doon to hym swich honour and reuerence as thee
 oughte / [2604] ne thou ne hast nat^r wel ytaken kepe / to

¶ Ouidius

the wordes of Ouide ¶ That seith || [2605] vnder the hony
of the goodes of the body / is hyd the venym / that sleeth
the soule [2606] ¶ And salomon seith ¶ If thou hast
founden hony / ete of it that suffiseth / [2607] for if thou
ete of it out of mesure / thou shalt spewe / and be nedy
and poure / [2608] And peraventure / Crist hath thee in
despit / and hath turned away fro thee his face and hise
eeris of Misericorde [2609] ¶ And also / he hath ¹suffred /
that thou hast been punysshed in the manere that thou
hast ytrespassed [2610] ¶ Thou hast doon synne / agayn
oure lord crist. [2611] for certes. the .iiij. enemys of man-
kynde / that is to seyn / the flessch / the feend and the
world /. [2612] thou hast suffred hem / entre in to thyn
herte wilfully by the wyndowes of thy body / [2613] and
hast nat defended thy self suffisantly agayns hire assautes /
and hire temptaciōs / so / that they han wounded thy
soule / in .v. places / [2614] this is to seyn / the deedly
synnes that been entred in-to thyn herte / by thy .v.
wittes ||. [2615] And in the same manere / oure lord crist
hath woold and suffred / that thy .iiij. enemys been entred /
in-to thyn hous by the wyndowes / [2616] and han
wywounded thy doghter in the foreseyde manere

¶ Melibee

[2617] ¶ Certes quod Melibee / I se wel that ye en-
force yow muchel by wordes / to ouercome me / in swich
manere that I shal nat / venge me of myne enemys [2618]
shewynge me the perils and the yueles / that myghten
falle of this vengeance || [2619] But who so wolde considere
in alle vengeancees the perils and yueles þat myghte sewe
of vengeance takynge / [2620] a man wolde neuere take
vengeance / and that were harm / [2621] for by the venge-
ance takynge / been the wikked men disseuered fro the
goode men [2622] ¶ And they that han wyl to do wikked-
nesse / restreynen hir wikked purpos / whan they seen the
punyssynge and chastisyng of the trespassours [2623]

[*E*t a ce Respont dame prudence certes dist elle *Je t'ottroye
que de vengeance vient molt de maulx Et de biens ;*

[2624] *Mais vengeance n'appartient pas a vn chascun
fors seulement aux iuges Et a ceulx qui ont la iuridicion
sur les malfaitteurs.* (MS Reg. 19 C. vii, leaf 136.)

[2625] ¶ And yet seye I moore / that right as a singuler
persone / synneth / in takynge vengeance of another man /

[2626] right so / synneth the Iuge / if he do no vengeance
of hem / that it han disserued || [2627] ffor Senec seith

¶ Seneca

thus ¶ That maister he seith is good / that proueth shrewes

[2628] ¶ And as Cassidore seith ¶ A man dredeth to do
outrages / whan he woot and knoweth / that it displeseth

¶ Cassidore

to the Iuges / and souereyns [2629] ¶ Another seith ¶ The
Iuge þat dredeth to do right. maketh men shrewes ||.

[2630] And Seint Paule the Apostle / seith in his epistle /
whan he writeth vn-to the Romayns: That the Iuges beren

¶ Paulus Apostolus ad Romanos

nat the spere / with-uten cause / [2631] but they beren it
to punysse the shrewes and mysdoeres / and to defende

the goode men [2632] ¶ If ye wol thanne take vengeance
of youre enemys / ye shul retourne / or haue youre recours

to the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccio[n] vp-on hem / [2633]
and he shal punysse hem / as the lawe axeth and requieth

[2634] A quod Melibee / this vengeance / liketh me
no thyng [2635] ¶ I bithenke me now and take heede /

¶ Melibee

how ffortune / hath norissed me fro my childhede /
and hath holpen me / to passe many a stroong paas [2636]

¶ Now wol I assayen hire trowynge with goddes helpe /
that she shal helpe me / my shame for to venge

[2637] Certes quod Prudence ¶ If ye wol werke by my
conseil / ye shul nat assaye ffortune by no wey / [2638] ne

¶ Prudence

ye shul nat lene or bowe / vnto hire after the word of
Senec [2639] ¶ ffor thynges / that been folily doon / and

¶ Seneca

that been in hope of ffortune / shullen neuere come to good
ende ||. [2640] And as the same Senec seith ¶ The moore

cleer and the moore shynyng that ffortune is / the moore
brotill / and the sonner broken she is || [2641] trusteth nat

in hire / for she nys nat stidefast ne stable [2642] for
whan thou trowest to be moost seur and siker of hire

¶ Seneca

helpe she wol faille thee / and deceyue thee [2643] ¶ And
 where as ye seyn that ffortune hath norissed yow fro youre
 childhede /. [2644] I seye / that¹ in so muchel / shul ye /
 the lasse truste in hire and in hir wit ||. [2645] ffor senec
 seith || what man that is norissed by ffortune / she maketh
 hym a greet fool [2646] ¶ Now thanne / syn ye desire /
 and axe vengeance / and the vengeance / that is doon after
 the lawe and bifore the Iuge / ne liketh yow nat¹ [2647]
 And the vengeance that is doon in hope of ffortune is peril-
 ous and vncertein [2648] Thanne haue ye noon oother
 remedie / but for to haue youre recours / vnto the souereyn
 Iuge that vengeth / alle vileynyes and wronges /. [2649]
 And he shal venge yow / after that hym self witnesseth /
 where as he seith ||. [2650] leueth the vengeance to me /
 and I shal do it

¶ Melibee

[2651] Melibee answerde ||. If I ne venge me nat¹. of
 the vileynye that men han doon to me [2652] .I. sompne or
 warne hem / that han doon to me that vileynye *and* alle
 othere / to do me another vileynye [2653] ¶ ffor it is written
 ¶ If thou take no vengeance of an oold vileynye / thou somp-
 nest thyne Aduersaries to do thee a newe vileynye [2654]
 ¶ And also / for my suffrance / men wolden do to me so
 muchel vileynye / that I myghte neither bere it ne sus-
 teene / [2655] and so sholde I been put¹ and holden ouer
 lowe [2656] ¶ ffor men seyn / In muchel suffrynge / shul
 manye thynges falle vn-to thee / whiche / thou shalt nat
 inowe suffre

¶ Prudence

[2657] Certes quod Prudence .I. graunte yow that
 ouer muchel suffraunce nys nat good / [2658] but yet ne
 folweth it nat ther-of / that euery persone / to whom men
 doon vileynye take of it vengeance / [2659] for that aper-
 teneth and longeth al oonly to the Iuges / for they shul
 venge the vileynyes and iniuries ||. [2660] And ther-fore /
 tho two Auctoritees / that ye han seyd aboue / been oonly
 vnderstonden in the Iuges / [2661] for whan they suffren
 ouer muchel the wronges and the vileynyes to be doon

withouten punysshynge / [2662] they sompne nat a man al
oonly / for to do newe wronges / but they comanden it
[2663] ¶ Also a wys man seith / that the Iuge that cor-
recteth nat the synnere comandeth and biddeth hym do
synne [2664] ¶ And the Iuges and souereyns myghten in
hir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and mysdoeres /
[2665] that they sholden by swich suffrance by proces of
tyme / wexen of swich power and myght / that they sholden
putte out the Iuges and the souereyns / from hir places /
[2666] and atte laste maken hem lesen hire lordshipes

[2667] ¶ But lat vs now putte / that ye haue leue to
venge yow / [2668] I seye / ye been nat of myght and
power / as now to venge yow / [2669] for if ye wole maken
comparisoñ / vn-to the myght of youre Aduersaries / ye shul
fynde in manye thynges / that I haue shewed yow er this /
that hire condicion / is bettre than youre [2670] ¶ And
therefore seye I that it is good as now / that ye suffre and
be pacient

[2671] ¶ fforthermoore / ye knowen wel / that after the
comune sawe / it is a woodnesse / a man / to stryue with a
strenger / or a moore myghty man / than he is hym self ||
[2672] And for to stryue with a man of euene strengthe /
that is to seyn / with as strong^a a man as he^t it is peril /
[2673] And for to stryue with a weyker man / it is folie
[2674] ¶ And therfore / sholde a man flee stryuyng / as
muchel as he myghte [2675] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || It is a
greet worshipe to a man / to kepen hym fro noyse and
stryf^e [2676] ¶ And if it so bifalle or happe / that a man
of gretter myght and strengthe / than thou art^e. do thee
greuaunce / [2677] studie / and bisye thee rather to stille /
the¹ same greuaunce / than for to venge thee || [2678] ffor
Senec^e seith || That he putteth hym in greet peril / that
stryueth with a gretter man / than he is hym self [2679]
¶ And Catoⁿ seith / If a man of hyer estaat^e or degree / or
moore myghty than thou / do thee anoy or greuañce /
suffre hym / [2680] for he that oones hath greued thee /

¶ Salomon

¶ Seneca

¶ Cato

another tyme / may releue thee and helpe: [2681] ¶ Yet sette I caas / ye haue bothe myght and licence / for to venge yow / [2682] .I. seye that ther be ful manye thynges / that shul restreyne yow / of vengeance takynge / [2683] and make yow / for to enclyne to suffre / and for to han pacience / in the thynges / that han been doon to yow [2684] ¶ ffirst and foreward / if ye wold considere the defautes / that been in youre owene persone / [2685] for whiche defautes / god hath suffred yow haue this tribulaciõ / as I haue seyð yow heer biforn [2686] ¶ ffor the Poete seith That we oghte paciently taken the tribulacions that comen to vs whan we thynken and consideren / that we han disserued to haue hem [2687] ¶ And Seint Gregorie seith || That whan a man considereth wel the nombre of hise defautes / and of his synnes /. [2688] the peynes and the tribulaciõs that he suffreth / semen / the lesse vn-to hym [2689] And in as muche / as hym thynketh / hise synnes moore heuy and greuous / [2690] in so muche / semeth his peyne the lighte / an[d] the esier vn-to hym [2691] ¶ Also / ye owen to enclyne and bowe youre herte / to take the pacience of oure lord Ihesu crist || As seith seint Peter in hise Epistles [2692] ¶ Ihesu crist he seith / hath suffred for vs and yeu ensample to euery man / to folwe and sewe hym / [2693] for he dide neuere synne / ne neuere cam ther a vileynous word out of his mouþ / [2694] whan men cursed hym / he cursed hem noght. And whan men betten hym / he manaced hem noght. [2695] ¶ Also / the grete pacience / which the seintes that been in Paradys / han had in tribulaciõs that they han ysuffred with-outen hir desert or gilt. [2696] oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience [2697] ¶ fforthermoore / ye sholde enforce yow / to haue pacience / [2698] considerynge / that the tribulaciõs of this world / but litel while endure / and soone passed been and goone [2699] ¶ And the ioye that a man / seketh to haue by pacience in tribulaciõs / is perdurable / after that the

¶ Poeta

¶ Gregorius

¶ Petrus in epistolis

Apostle seith in his epistle [2700] ¶ The ioye of god / he
 seith is perdurable / that is to seyn euerelastyng [2701] ¶ Apostolus
 ¶ Also troweþ and bileueth stedefastly / that he nys nat
 wel ynorissed ne wel ytaught that kan nat haue pacience /
 or wol nat receyue pacience: [2702] ffor Salomon seith ¶ Salomon
 ¶ That the doctrine and the wit of a man / is knowen by
 pacience [2703] ¶ And in another place he seith ¶ that he
 that is pacient. gouerneth hym by greet prudence [2704]
 ¶ And the same Salomon seith The angry and wrathful
 man / maketh noyses / And the pacient man atempreth
 hem and stilleth [2705] ¶ He seith also / It is moore
 worth to be pacient than for to be right strong. [2706] And
 he that may haue the lordshipe of his owene herte / is
 moore to preysse / than he that by his force or strengthe
 taketh grete Citees [2707] ¶ And therfore / seith Seint
 Iame in his Epistle ¶ That pacience / is a greet vertu of
 perfeccion ¶ Iacobus 11
 12

[2708] ¶ Certes quod Melibee /. I graunte yow Dame
 Prudence / that pacience / is a greet vertu of perfeccion /
 [2709] but euery man may nat haue the perfeccion þat ye
 seeken / [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre / of right par-
 fite men / [2711] for myn ¹herte / may neuere been in
 pees / vn-to the tyme it be venged / [2712] And al be it so
 that it was greet peril to myne enemys / to do me a
 vileynye / in takynge vengeance vp-on me /. [2713] yet
 tooken they noon heede of the peril / but fulfilleden / hir
 wikked wyl and hir corage [2714] ¶ And therfore / me
 thynketh men oghten nat repreue me / though I putte me
 in a lital peril for to venge me / [2715] And though .I. do
 a greet excesse / that is to seyn / that I venge oon outrage
 by another ¶ Melibee

[2716] A quod dame Prudence / ye seyn youre wyl /
 and as yow liketh / [2717] but in no caas of the world / a
 man sholde nat doon outrage ne excesse / for to vengen
 hym [2718] ¶ ffor Cassidore seith ¶ That as yuele dooth
 he that vengeth hym by outrage / as he that dooth the
 ¶ Prudence
 ¶ Cassidore

outrage ||. [2719] And therfore / ye shul venge yow / after
 the ordre of right / that is to seyn by the lawe / and noght
 by excesse ne by outrage [2720] ¶ And also / If ye wol
 venge yow of the outrage of youre Aduersaries in oother
 manere than right comandeth / ye synnen: [2721] And
 therfore seith Senec ||. That a man shal neuere vengen
 shrewednesse / by shrewednesse [2722] ¶ And if ye seye /
 that right axeth / a man to defenden violence by violence /
 and fightyng by fightyng: [2723] Certes / ye seye sooth
 whan the defense is doon anon with-outen Interualle or
 with-outen taryng or delay [2724] for to deffenden hym /
 and nat for to vengen hym: [2725] ¶ And it bihoueth /
 that a man putte swich attemperance in his defense:
 [2726] that men haue no cause ne matiere / to repreuen
 hym that deffendeth hym of excesse and outrage / for ellis
 were it agayn resoñ [2727] ¶ Pardee / ye knowen wel /
 that ye maken no defense as now / for to deffende yow
 but for to venge yow / [2728] and so sheweth it that ye
 han no wyl to do youre dede attemprely ||. [2729] And
 therfore / me thynketh that pacience is good || ffor Salomon
 seith ¶ That he that is nat pacient shal haue greet
 harm

¶ Salomon

¶ Melibee

[2730] Certes quod Melibee / I graunte yow / that
 whan a man is inpacient and wrooth / of that þat toucheth
 hym noght and that aperteneth nat vn-to hym / though it
 harme hym / it is no wonder || [2731] ffor the lawe seith ||
 That he is coupable that entremetteth or medleth / with
 swych thyng as aperteneth nat vn-to hym [2732] ¶ And
 Salomon seith || That he that entremetteth hym of the
 noyse or strif / of another man / is lyk to hym / that taketh
 an hound by the eris || [2733] ffor right as he that taketh
 a straunge hound by the eris / is outhurwhile / biten with
 the hound [2734] Right in the same wise is it resoñ / that
 he haue harm / that by his inpacience / medleth hym / of
 the noyse of another man / where-as it aperteneth nat vn-to
 hym [2735] ¶ But ye knowen wel / that this dede / that

¶ Salomon

is to seyn / my grief and my disese / toucheth me right
 ny ||. [2736] And therfore / though I be wrooth and in-
 pacient. it is no merueille / [2737] And sauynge youre
 grace / I kan nat seen / that it myghite greetly harme me /
 though I tooke vengeance / [2738] for I am richer / and
 moore myghty than myne enemys been / [2739] And wel
 knowen ye / that by moneye and by hauynge grete posses-
 sions / been alle the thynges of this world gouerned [2740]
 ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ That alle thynges / obeyen to ¶ Salomon
 moneye /.

[2741] Whan Prudence / hadde herd hir housbonde ¶ Prudence
 auanten hym of his richesse and of his moneye / dispreis-
 ynge the power of hise Aduersaries / she spak / and seyde in
 this wise [2742] ¶ Certes / deere sire I graunte yow that
 ye been riche and myghty / [2743] and that the richesces
 been goode / to hem þat han hem wel ygeten hem / and
 wel konne vsen hem ||. [2744] ffor ¹right as the body of a
 man / may nat lyuen with-oute the soule / namoore may it
 lyue / with-uten temporeel goodes / [2745] And for rich-
 esses / may a man gete hym grete freendes [2746] ¶ And
 therfore seith Pamphilles ¶ If a netherles doghter seith ¶ Pamphilles
 he / be riche / she may chesen of a thousand men / [*lequel
 quelle veult pour mary* (MS Reg. 19 C. vii, lf 140)] [2747] for
 of a thousand men / oon wol nat forsaken hire ne refusen
 hire [2748] ¶ And this Pamphilles seith also ¶ If thou be
 right happy /. that is to seyn / If thou be right riche / thou
 shalt fynde a greet nombre of felawes and freendes ||. [2749]
 And if thy ffortune change / that thou wexe poure / fare-
 wel / freendshipe and felaweshipe / [2750] for thou shalt be
 al alloone with-uten any compaignye / but if it be / the
 compaignye of poure folk [2751] ¶ And yet seith / this
 Pamphilles moreouer ¶ That they that been thralle and
 bonde of lynage shullen been maad worthy and noble by
 the richesces [2752] ¶ And right so / as by richesces / ther
 comen manye goodes /. right so by pouerte come ther
 manye harmes and yueles /. [2753] for greet pouerte con-

streyneth a man / to do manye yueles /. [2754] And therfore / clepeth Cassidore / pouerte / the mooder of Ruyn / [2755] that is to seyn / the mooder of ouerthrowynge or
¶ Cassidore
¶ Petrus Alfonce fallynge doun [2756] ¶ And therfore seith Piers Alfonce ||. Oon of the gretteste Aduersitees of this world is / [2757] whan a free man / by kynde or by burthe is constreyned by pouerte to eten the Almesse of his enemy [2758] ¶ And
¶ Innocencius the same seith Innocent in oon of hise bookes ||. he seith / that sorweful and myshappy / is the condicioñ of a poure beggere / [2759] for if he axe nat his mete / he dyeth for hunger /. [2760] And if he axe / he dyeth for shame / And algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe [2761]
¶ Salomon ¶ And therfore seith Salomon || That bet it is to dye / than for to haue swich pouerte : [2762] ¶ And as the same Salomon seith ¶ Better it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to lyuen / in swich wise [2763] ¶ By thise resons / that I haue seid vn-to yow / and by manye othere resons that I koude seye s / [2764] I graunte yow / that richesces been goode to hem / that geten hem wel / and to hem that wel vsen tho richesces [2765] ¶ And therfore wol I shewe yow / hou ye shul haue yow / and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of richesces / and in what manere / ye shul vsen hem

[2766] ¶ ffirst ye shul geten hem with-outen greet desir / by good leyser sekyngly / and nat ouer hastily / [2767] ffor a man that is to desiryng to gete richesces / abaundoneth hym first to thefte / and to alle other yueles
¶ Salomon [2768] ¶ And therfore seith Salomon ¶ He that hasteth hym to bisily / to wexe riche shal be noon Innocent [2769] ¶ He seith also /. that the richesce that hastily cometh to a man / soone and lightly / gooth and passeth fro a man [2770] ¶ but that richesce / that cometh litel and litel wexeth alwey and multiplieth [2771] ¶ And sire / ye shul geten richesces / by youre wit and by youre trauaille vn-to youre profit. [2772] and that with-outen wrong or harm doynge / to any oother persone [2773] ¶ ffor the lawe

seith / that ther maketh no man himseluen riche / if he do
 harm to another wight || [2774] This is to seyn / that
 nature deffendeth and forbedeth by right that no man
 make hym-self riche / vn-to the harm of another persone
 [2775] ¶ And Tullius seith || þat no sorwe / ne no drede ¶ Tullius
 of deeth / ne no thyng that may falle vn-to a man / [2776]
 is so muchel agayns nature / as a man to encressen his
 owene profit to the harm of another man || [2777] And though
 the grete men ¹and the myghty men geten riches moore
 lightly than thou /. [2778] yet shaltou nat been ydel ne
 slow to do thy profit. for thou shalt in alle wise flee ydel-
 nesse [2779] ¶ ffor Salomon seith /. that ydelnesse / techeth ¶ Salomon
 a man to do manye yueles [2780] ¶ And the same Salomon
 seith || That he that trauaileth and bisieth hym to tilien
 his land / shal eten breed [2781] but he that is ydel / and
 casteth hym to no bisynesse ne occupacion / shal falle in-to
 pouerte / and dye for hunger [2782] ¶ And he that is
 ydel and slow / kan neuere fynde couenable tyme for to
 doon his profit. [2783] ffor ther is a versifour seith / that ¶ Vnde versifi-
 the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter / by cause of the cator
 grete coold and in somer / by encheson of the heete ||
 [2784] ffor thise causes seiþ Caton ||. waketh and enclyneth ¶ Cato
 nat yow ouer muchel / for to slepe / for ouer muchel reste
 norisseth and causeth manye vices ||. [2785] And therfore /
 seith Seint Ierome ||. Dooth somme goodes / that the deuel /
 which is oure enemy / ne fynde yow nat vnocupied ||. ¶ Sanctus Ieroni-
 [2786] ffor the deuel ne taketh nat lightly vn-to his werk-
 ynge swiche as he fyndeth occupied in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Thanne thus / In getyngge riches / ye
 mosten flee ydelnesse ||. [2788] And afterward ye shul vse
 the riches / whiche ye haue geten by youre wit and by
 youre trauaille / [2789] in swich a manere / that men
 holde nat yow / to scars ne to sparynge ne to fool large /
 that is to seyn / ouer large a spendere / [2790] for right as
 men blamen an Auaricious man / by cause / of his scarsetee
 and chyngerie / [2791] In the same wise is he to blame

- that spendeth ouer largely || [2792] And therfore seith
 ¶ Cato Caton ¶ Vse he seith / thy riches that thou hast geten
 [2793] in swich a manere / that men haue / no matiere ne
 cause / to calle thee / neiþer wrecche ne chynche / [2794]
 for it is a greet shame to a man / to haue a pouere herte
 and a riche purs [2795] ¶ He seith also / the goodes that
 thou hast ygeten / vse hem by mesure / that is to seyn /
 spende hem mesurably / [2796] for they that folily / wasten
 and despenden / the goodes that they han s [2797] whan
 they han namore propre of hir owene / they shapen hem
 to take the goodes of another man [2798] ¶ I seye thanne /
 that ye shul fleen Auarice / [2799] vsynge youre riches /
 in swich manere / that men seye nat þat youre riches
 been yburyed / [2800] but þat ye haue hem in youre
 myght and in youre weeldynge [2801] ¶ ffor a wys man /
 repreueth the Auaricious man / and seith thus / in two
 ¶ Vnde versifi- vers [2802] ¶ Wherto and why / burieth a man hise
 cator goodes by his grete Auarice / and knoweth wel that nedes
 moste he dye / [2803] for deeth is the ende of euery man /
 as in this present lyf [2804] ¶ And for what cause / or
 encheson ioyneþ he hym / or knytteth he hym / so faste
 vn-to hise goodes / [2805] that alle hise wittes mowen nat
 disseueren hym / or departen hym from hise goodes /
 [2806] and knoweth wel / or oghte knowe / that whan he
 is deed / he shal no thyng bere with hym / out of this
 ¶ Augustinus world [2807] ¶ And therfore seith seint Augustyn || That
 the Auaricious man is likned vn-to helle / [2808] that the
 moore it swelweth / the moore desir it hath to swelwe and
 deuoure / [2809] And as wel / as ye wolde eschewe / to be
 called an Auaricious man / or chynche / [2810] as wel
 sholde ye kepe yow and gouerne yow / in swich a wise /
 that men calle yow nat fool large [2811] ¶ Therefore seith
 ¶ Tullius Tullius ||. The goodes he seith of thyn hous / ne sholde
 nat been hyd / ne kept so cloos ¹but that they myghte
 been opened by pitee and debonairetee [2812] ¶ that is to
 seyn / to yeuen part to hem that han greet nede /. [2813]

ne thy goodes / shullen nat been so opene / to been every
mannes goodes [2814] ¶ Afterward / in getyng of youre
richesses / and in vsyng hem / ye shul alwey / haue thre
thynges in youre herte /. [2815] that is to seyn / Oure lord
god / Conscience / and good name [2816] ¶ ffirst / ye shul
haue god in youre herte / [2817] and for no richesse / ye
shullen do no thyng. which may in any manere displese
god / that is youre creatour and makere [2818] ¶ ffor after
the word of Salomon ¶ It is bettre to haue a litel good ¶ Salomon
with the loue of god / [2819] than to haue / muchel good
and tresour / and lese the loue of his lord god [2820]
¶ And the prophete seith || That bettre it is / to been a ¶ Prophete
good man and haue litel good and tresour / [2821] than to
been holden a shrewe / and haue grete richesces [2822]
¶ And yet seye I ferthermoore / that ye sholde alwey
doon youre bisynesse to gete yow richesces / [2823] so that
ye gete hem with good conscience [2824] ¶ And thapostle ¶ Apocofus
seith ||. that ther nys thyng in this world / of which / we
sholden haue so greet ioye / as whan oure Conscience bereth
vs good witesse [2825] ¶ And the wise man seith || The ¶ Sapient
substance of a man is ful good / whan synne is nat in
mannes conscience [2826] ¶ Afterward in getyng of youre
richesses / and in vsyng of hem / [2827] yow moste haue
greet bisynesse and greet diligence / that youre goode
name / be alwey kept and conserued ||. [2828] ffor salo- ¶ Salomon
mon seith /. that bettre it is / and moore it auailleth a man
to haue a good name / than for to haue grete richesces *
[2829] And therfore / he seith in another place ¶ Do greet
diligence seith Salomon / in kepyng of thy freend / and of
thy goode name / [2830] for it shal lenger abide with
thee / than any tresour / be it neuer so precious [2831]
¶ And certes he sholde nat be called a gentil man / that
after god and good conscience / alle thynges lef. ne dooth
his diligence and bisynesse / to kepen his good name
[2832] ¶ And Cassidore seith ¶ That it is signe of gentil ¶ Cassidore
herte ° whan a man loueth and desireth to han a good name

¶ Augustinus

[2833] ¶ And therfore seith Seint Augustyn ¶ That ther
been two thynges / that' arn necessarie and nedefulle /
[2834] and that is good Conscience and good loos / [2835]
but is to seyn / good Conscience / to thyn owene personē
inward / and good loos for thy neighebores outward /
[2836] And he that trusteth hym so muchel in his goode
conscience / [2837] that he displeseth / and setteth at
nogh't his goode name or loos / and rekketh nogh't though
he kepe nat his goode name / nys but a crueel cherl /

¶ Philosophus

¶ Salomon

[2838] Sire / now haue I shewed yow / how ye shul
do in getyngē riches / and how / ye shullen vsen hem /
[2839] and I se wel / that for the trust' that ye han in
yours riches / ye wole moeue werre and bataille [2840]
¶ I conseille yow / that ye bigynne no werre / in trust' of
yours riches / for they ne suffisen nogh't werres to mayn-
tene [2841] ¶ And therfore / seith a Philosophre ¶ That
man / that' desireth / and wole algates han werre / shal
neuere haue suffisaunce / [2842] for the richer that he is /
the gretter despenses moste he make / if he wole haue wor-
shipe and victorie [2843] ¶ And Salomon seith ¶. That the
gretter riches that a man hath / the mo despendours he
hath [2844] ¶ And deere sire / al be it so / that for yours
riches / ye mowe haue muchel folk' [2845] yet biloueth
it nat'. ne it is nat good to bigynne werre / where as ye
mowe in oother manere / haue pees vn-to yours worshipe
and ¹profit [2846] ¶ ffor the victories of batailles that been
in this world' / lyen nat' in greet nombre or multitude of
the peple / ne in the vertu of man / [2847] but it lith in
the wyl / and in the hand of oure lord god almyghty
[2848] ¶ And therfore / Iudas Machabeus / which was
goddes knyght'. [2849] whan he sholde fighte agayn his
aduersarie that hadde a greet nombre / and a gretter mul-
titude of folk / and strengre than was this peple of Macha-
bee /. [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye / and
seyde right in this wise [2851] ¶ Als lightly quod he /
may oure lord god almyghty yeue victorie to a fewe folk'

as to many folk. [2852] for the victorie of a bataille comth
 nat by the grete nombre of peple / [2853] but it come /
 from oure lord god of heuene [2854] ¶ And deere sire / for
 as muchel / as ther is no man certein / if he be worthy / that
 god yeue hym victorie [*ne plus que il est certain se il est digne
 de l'amour de Dieu* (Le Ménagier, i. 226)] or naught /. After
 that Salomon seith / [2855] therfore / euery mansholde greetly ¶ Salomon
 drede werres to bigynne / [2856] ¶ And by cause / that in
 batailles / fallen manye perils / [2857] and happeth outhr
 while / that as soone is the grete man slayn as the litel
 man /. [2858] And as it is writen / in the seconde book of ¶ In .iiij. libro
 kynges The dedes of batailles been auenturouse / and no Regum
 thyng certeyne / [2859] for as lightly is oon hurt with a
 spere as another ¶. [2860] And for ther is gret peril in
 werre / therfore / sholde a man flee and eschue werre / in
 as muchel as a man may goodly ¶. [2861] ffor Salomon ¶ Salomon
 seith /. He that loueth peril shal falle in peril

[2862] After that Dame Prudence / hadde spoken in ¶ Melibee
 this manere / Melibee answerde and seyde [2863] ¶ I see
 wel dame Prudence that by youre faire wordes / and by
 youre resous that ye han shewed me / that the werre liketh
 yow no thyng. [2864] but I haue nat yet herd youre con-
 seil / how I shal do in this nede

[2865] Certes quod she I conseilte yow / that ye ¶ Prudence
 accorde with youre aduersaries / and that ye haue pees
 with hem [2866] ¶ ffor Seint Iame seith / in hise epistles ¶ Sanctus Iacobus
 ¶ That by concord and pees / the smale richesses wexen in epistolis
 grete / [2867] and by debaat and discorde / the grete richesses
 fallen down [2868] ¶ And ye knowen wel that oon of the
 gretteste and moost souereyn thyng. that is in this world /
 is vnytee and pees [2869] ¶ And therfore / seyde oure lord ¶ Dominus Apo-
 Ihesu crist to hise Apostles in this wise [2870] ¶ wel stolicus
 happy and blessed been they that louen and purchacen
 pees / for they been called children of god [2871] ¶ quod
 Melibee / now se I wel / that ye louen nat myn honour ¶ Melibee
 ne my worshipec [2872] ¶ Ye knowen wel that mync

Aduersaries / han bigonnen this debaat and bryge / by hire outrage / [2873] and ye se wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees / ne they asken nat to be reconciled [2874] ¶ wol ye thanne / that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem and crie hem mercy ?/. [2875] ffor sothe / that were nat my worshiþe [2876] ffor right as men seyn / that ouer greet hoomlynnesse / engendreth dispreisyng / so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse

¶ Prudence

[2877] Thanne bigan dame Prudence / to maken semblant of wratthe / and seyde [2878] ¶ Certes sire / sauf youre grace / I loue youre honour and youre profit as I do myn owene / and euere haue doon / [2879] ne ye ne noon oother / syen neuere the contrarie [2880] ¶ And yit if I hadde seyde / that ye sholde han purchaced the pees / and the reconsiliaciõ / I ne hadde nat muchel mystaken me /

¶ Sapientia

ne seyde amys /. [2881] ffor the wise man seiþ ¶ The dissensiõ / bigynneth by another man / and the reconsilyng

¶ propheta

by-gynneth by thy self [2882] ¶ And the prophete seiþ ||. flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse / [2883] seke pees and folwe it as muchel as in thee is [2884] ¶ Yet seye I nat that ye shul rather pursue to youre Aduersaries for pees than they shuln to yow ||. [2885] for I knowe wel / that ye been so hard-herted / that ye wol do no thyng for me [2886] ¶ And Salomon seiþ ||. he that hath ouer hard an herte / atte laste / he shal myshappe and mystyde

¶ Salomon

¶ Melibee

[2887] Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe / he seyde in this wise [2888] ¶ Dame I prey yow that ye be nat displesed / of thynges that I seye [2889] for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth / and that is no wonder / [2890] and they that been wrothe / witen nat wel / what they don ne what they seyn [2891] ¶ Therfore / the prophete seiþ ¶ That troubled eyen / han no cleer sighte [2892] ¶ but seyeth and conseilith me as yow liketh / for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire / [2893] and if ye repreue me of my folye / I am the moore holden / to loue yow and preyse

¶ propheta

yow [2894] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. That he þat repreueth ¶ Salomon
hym that dooth folye / [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace
than he / that deceyueth hym by sweete wordes

[2896] Thanne seide dame Prudence ¶ I make no
semblant of wratthe ne Anger / but for youre grete profit
[2897] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. He is moore worth that re- ¶ Salomon
preueth / or chideth a fool for his folye shewynge hym
semblant of wratthe / [2898] than he that supporteth hym
and p[r]eyeth hym in his mysdoynge and laugheth at his
folye [2899] ¶ And this same Salomon / seith afterward .||.
That by the sorweful visage of a man / that is to seyn / by
the sory and heuy contenance of a man / [2900] the fool
correcteth and amendeth hym self

[2901] Thanne seyde Melibee ¶ I shal nat konne an- ¶ Melibee
swere to so manye faire resoñs / as ye putten to me and
shewen / [2902] seyeth shortly youre wyl and youre con-
seil / and I am al redy to fulfille and parfourne it

[2903] Thanne dame Prudence / discovered al hir wyl ¶ Prudence
to hym / and seyde [2904] ¶ I conseilte yow quod she
abouen alle thynges / that ye make pees / bitwene god and
yow / [2905] and beth reconciled vn-to hym and to his
grace || [2906] ffor as I haue seyd yow heer biforn /. god
hath suffred yow to haue this tribulaciō and disese for
your synnes / [2907] And if ye do as I sey yow / god wol
sende youre Aduersaries vn-to yow [2908] and maken hem
fallen at youre feet redy to do youre wyl and youre com-
andementz [2909] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. whan the con- ¶ Salomon
diciō of man is plesaunt and likynge to god /. [2910] he
chaungeth the hertes of the mannes Aduersaries and con-
streyneth hem / to biseken hym / of pees and of grace /
[2911] and I prey yow / lat me speke with youre Aduersaries
in priuee place / [2912] for they shul nat knowe / that it
be of youre wyl / or youre assent. [2913] and thanne whan
I knowe / hir wil and hire entente /. I may conseilte yow
the moore seurely

[2914] Dame quod Melibee / dooth youre wil and ¶ Melibee

yourre likyng / [2915] for I putte me hoolly / in yourre
disposicioñ and ordinaunce

¶ Prudence

[2916] Thanne Dame Prudence / whan she saugh the
goode wyl of hir housbonde / delibered and took auys in
hir self. [2917] thinkinge / how she myghte bryngē this
nede / vn-to a good conclusioñ / and to a good ende /.
[2918] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she sente for thise
Aduersaries / to come vn-to hire in to a pryuee place /
[2919] and shewed wisely vn-to hem / the grete goodes
that comen of pees / [2920] and the grete har'mes and
perils / that been in werre / [2921] and seyde to hem / in
a goodly manere /. hou that hem oughten / haue greet re-
pentance / [2922] of the Iniurie and wrong' that they
hadden doon / to Melibee hir lord / and to hire / And to
hire doghter

[2923] And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of
Dame Prudence / [2924] they weren so supprised and
rauysshed / and hadden so greet ioye of hire / that wonder
was to telle [2925] ¶ A lady quod they / ye han shewed
vn-to vs / the blessyng of swetnesse / after the sawe of
Dauid the prophete / [2926] for the reconsilyng / which
we been nat worthy to haue in no manere / [2927] but we
oghte requeren it with greet contricioñ and humylitee /
[2928] ye of yourre grete goodnesse haue presented vnto vs
[2929] ¶ Now se we wel / that the science and the konnyng
of Salomon is ful trewe [2930] ¶ ffor he seith || That
sweete wordes / multiplien and encreesen freendes / and
maken shrewes / to be debonaire and meeke

[2931] ¶ Certes quod they ./ we putten oure dede and
al oure matere and cause / al hoolly / in yourre goode wyl /
[2932] and been redy to obeye to the speche and comande-
ment' of my lord Melibee [2933] ¶ And therfore decre
and benygne lady / we preien yow and biseke yow as
mekely as we konne and mowen / [2934] that it lyke vn-to
yourre grete goodnesse / to fulfillen in dede / yourre good-
liche wordes / [2935] for we consideren and knowelichen /

that we hau offended and greued my lord Melibee out of
 mesure /. [2936] so ferforth / that we be nat of power / to
 maken hise amendes / [2937] and therfore / we oblige and
 bynden vs and oure freendes / to doon al his wyl and hise
 comandementz || [2938] ¶ but peraventure / he hath swich
 heuynesse / and swich wratthe to vs ward / by cause of oure
 offense / [2939] that he wole enioyne vs swich a payne /
 as we mowe nat bere ne susteene /. [2940] and therfore
 noble lady / we biseke / to youre wommanly pitee / [2941]
 to taken swich ayusement in this nede / that we / ne oure
 freendes / be nat desherited ne destroyed / thurgh oure
 folye

[2942] Certes quod Prudence / it is an hard thyng^r and ¶ Prudence
 right^r perilous / [2943] that a man putte hym al outrelly /
 in the arbitracioñ and Iuggement^r. and in the myght^r and
 power of hise enemys [2944] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || Leeueth ¶ Salomon
 me / and yeueth credence / to that I shal seyn ¶ I seye
 quod he ¶ ye peple / folk^r and gouernours of hooly chirche
 [2945] ¶ to thy sone / to thy wyf / to thy freend / ne to
 thy broother / [2946] ne yeue thou neuere myght^r ne
 maistrie of thy body / whil thou lyuest. [2947] ¶ Now
 sithen he deffendeth / that man shal nat yeuen to his
 broother / ne to his freend / the myght^r of his body^s
 [2948] by strenger resoñ he deffendeth / and forbedeth a
 man / to yeuen hym self to his enemy [2949] ¶ And nathe-
 lees I conseilte you / that ye / mystruste nat my lord^r /
 [2950] for I woot wel / and knowe verrailly / that he is /
 debonaire and meeke / large / curteys / [2951] and no
 thyng^r desirous ne coueitous of good ne richesse [2952]
 ¶ for ther nys no thyng^r in this world that he desireth /
 saue oonly / worshipe and honour [2953] ¶ fforther-moore
 I knowe wel / and am right seur / that he shal no thyng^r
 doon in this nede / with-uten my conseil / [2954] And I
 shal so werken in this cause / that^r by grace of oure lord
 god / ye shul been reconciled vn-to vs

[2955] Thannc seyden they / with o. ¹voys || worshipful

lady we putten vs and oure goodes al fully in youre wil
and disposicioñ / [2956] and been redy / to comen / what
day þat it like vn-to youre noblesse to lymyte vs or assigne
vs [2957] for to maken oure obligacioñ and boond as strong^r
as it liketh vn-to youre goodnesse / [2958] that we mowe
fulfille the wille of yow / and of my lord Melibee

¶ Prudence

[2959] Whan Dame Prudence / halde herd the an-
sweres of thise men / she bad hem / goon agayn priuely /
[2960] and she retourned to hir lord Melibee / and tolde
hym / how she foond hise Aduersaries ful repentant^r [2961]
knowelechyng ful lowely hir synnes and trespas / and how
they were redy to suffren all payne / [2962] requiryng and
preiynge hym of mercy and pitee :

¶ Melibee

[2963] Thanne seyde Melibee ¶ he is wel worthy to
haue pardoñ and foryifnesse of his synne þat excuseth nat
his synne / [2964] but knowelecheth it and repenteth
hym / axinge Indulgence [2965] ¶ ffor Senec / seith ||. ther
is the remissioñ and foryifnesse. where as confessioñ is
[2966] ¶ ffor Confessioñ is neighebre to Innocence [2967]
[*et dît autre part: celui est presque innocent qui a honte de
son péchié et le reconnoist.* (Le Ménagier, i. 231)]
And therefore I assente and corforme me to haue pees /
[2968] but it is good þat we do it nat with-outen the assent
and wyl of oure freendes

¶ Prudence

[2969] Thanne was Prudence right glad and ioyeful /
and seyde [2970] ¶ Certes sire quod she ye han wel and
goodly answered [2971] ffor right as by the conseil /
assent and helpe of youre freendes / ye han been stired /
to venge yow and maken werre s [2972] right so with-
outen hire conseil / shul ye nat accorden yow / ne haue
pees with youre Aduersaries [2973] ¶ ffor the lawe seith ||
ther nys no thyng so good by wey of kynde / as a thyng
to been vnbounde by hym þat it was ybounde

[2974] ¶ And thanne Dame Prudence with-outen delay
or tariynge / sente anon hire messages for hire kyn and for
hire olde freendes / whiche þat were trewe and wyse / [2975]

and tolde hem by ordre / in the presence of Melibee al
 this mateere as it is abouen expressed *and* declared / [2976]
 and preyden þat they wolde yeuen hire auys *and* con-
 seil / what best were to doon in this nede [2977] ¶ And
 whan Melibeus freendes hadde taken hire auys *and* deliber-
 acion of the forseide mateere / [2978] *and* hadden examyned
 it by greet bisynesse *and* greet diligence / [2979] they yaued
 ful conseil for to haue pees *and* reste / [2980] *and* þat
 Melibee / sholde receyue *with* good herte hise aduersaries /
 to foryifnesse *and* mercy

[2981] And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the
 assent^t of hir lord Melibee / *and* the conseil of hise freendes
 [2982] accorde *with* hire wille *and* hire entencion / [2983]
 she was wonderly glad in hire herte / *and* seyde [2984]
 ¶ Ther is an old prouerbe quod she seith ||. That the ¶ Prudence
 goodnesse þat thou mayst do this day / do it [2985] *and*
 abide nat^t ne delaye it nat^t til to morwe [2986] ¶ And
 therefore / I conseil^e þat ye sende youre messages swiche
 as been discrete *and* wise / [2987] vn-to youre Aduersaries /
 tellynge hem on youre bihalue / [2988] þat if they wole
 trete of pees *and* of accord^t / [2989] that they shape hem /
 with-uten delay or taryng^t to comen vn-to vs / [2990]
 which thyng^t parfourned was in dede [2991] ¶ And
 whanne thise trespassours *and* repentyng^e folk^t of hire
 folies / that is to seyn / the Aduersaries of Melibee / [2992]
 hadden herd / what thise Messagers seyden vn-to hem /
 [2993] they weren right glad *and* ioyeful / *and* answereden
 ful mekely *and* benignely / [2994] yeldyng^e graces *and*
 thankynges to hir lord Melibee *and* to al his compaignye /
 [2995] *and* shopen hem with-uten delay to go *with* the
 Messagers *and* obeie to the comandement^t of hir lord
 Melibee

[2996] ¶ And right anon / they tooken hire wey to the
 Court of Melibee / [2997] *and* tooken *with* hem / somme
 of hire trewe freendes / to maken feith for hem *and* for to
 been hire borwes / [2998] *and* whan they were comen / ¹to

¶ Melibee

the presence of Melibee / he seyde hem thise wordes
 [2999] It standeth thus quod Melibee / and sooth it is /
 that ye [3000] causelees and with-outen skile *and* resoñ
 [3001] han doon grete Iniuries *and* wronges / to me and
 to my wyf Prudence: and to my doghter also / [3002] for
 ye han entred in to myn hous by violence [3003] and hau
 doon swich outrage þat alle men knowen wel þat ye hau
 disserued the deeth / [3004] and therfore / wol I knowe
 and wite of yow / [3005] wheither ye wol putte the
 punyusement *and* the chastisyng / *and* the vengeance of
 this outrage / in the wyl of me / and of my wyf Prudence /
 or ye wol nat

[3006] Thanne / the wiseste of hem thre answerde for
 hem alle and seyde [3007] ¶ Sire quod he / we knowen
 wel / þat we been vnworthy / to comen vn-to the Court
 of so greet a lord and so worthy as ye been & [3008] ffor
 we han so greetly mystaken vs / and han offended and agilt
 in swich a wise / agayn youre heigh lordshipe / [3009] that
 trewely / we han disserued the deeth / [3010] but yet for
 the grete goodnesse and debonairetee þat al the world /
 witnesseth in youre persone / [3011] we submytten vs / to
 the excellence *and* benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe /
 [3012] and been redy to obeie to alle youre comandementz /
 [3013] bisekyng yow / that of youre merciable pitee / ye
 wol considere oure grete repentañce *and* lough submyssion
 [3014] *and* graunten vs foryeuenesse of oure outrageous
 trespas *and* offense / [3015] for wel we knowe þat youre
 liberal grace *and* mercy / strecchen hem farther in-to good-
 nesse / than doon oure outrageous giltes and trespas in-to
 wikkednesse / [3016] al be it þat cursedly *and* damp-
 nably / we han agilt agayn youre heigh lordshipe

[3017] Thanne Melibee / took hem vp fro the ground
 ful benignely [3018] *and* receyued hire obligaciõs *and* hir
 boondes by hire othes vp-on hire plegges *and* borwes / [3019]
 and assigned hem a certeyn day / to retourne vn-to his
 Court. [3020] for to accepte *and* receyue the sentence *and*

Iuggement þat Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem
by the causes aforeseyd [3021] whiche thynges ordeyned /
euery man retourned to his hous |

[3022] And whan þat dame Prudence saugh hir
tyme / she freyned and axed hir lord Melibee / [3023] what
vengeance / he thoughte to taken of hise Aduersaries

[3024] To which Melibee answerde and seyde ¶ Certes ¶ Melibee
quod he / I thynke and purpose me fully / [3025] to des-
herite hem / of al þat euere they han / and for to putte
hem / in exil for euere

[3026] Certes quod dame Prudence / this were a cruel ¶ Prudence
sentence and muchel agayn reson / [3027] ffor ye been rich
ynough and han no nede of oother mennes good / [3028]
and ye myghte lightly in this wise gete yow a coueitous
name / [3029] which is a vicious thyng and oghte been
eschued of euery good man [3030] ffor after the sawe of the
word of the Apostle / Coueitise is roote of alle harmes , ¶ Apostolus
[3031] And therefore it were bettre for yow / to lese so muchel
good of youre owene / than for to taken of hir good in this
manere / [3032] for bettre it is to lesen with worshippe
than it is to wynne with vileynye and shame / [3033] And
euery man oghte to doon his diligence and his bisnesse /
to geten hym a good name / [3034] And yet shal he nat
only bisie hym in kepyng of his good name . [3035] but
he shal also enforcen hym alwey / to do som thyng by
which he may renouelle his good name / [3036] for it is
writen / þat the olde good loos and good name of a man /
is soone goon and passed / whan it is nat newed ne re-
nouelled [3037] ¶ And as touchyng / þat ye seyn / ye
wole exile youre Aduersaries / [3038] that thynketh me /
muchel agayn reson / and out of mesure / [3039] con-
sidered the power þat they han yeue yow vp-on hem self |
[3040] And it is writen þat he is worthy / to lessen his
priuilege / þat mysuseth / the myght and the power þat
is yeuen hym [3041] ¶ And I sette cas / ye myghte enioyne
hem þat payne by right and by lawe / [3042] which I

trowe / ye mowe nat do /. [3043] I seye ye mighte nat
 putten it to execucion *per-aventure* / [3044] and thanne
 were it likly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn /
 [3045] And therfore / if ye wole þat men do yow obeis-
 ance / ye moste deemen moore curteisly / [3046] this is to
 seyn / ye moste yeuen moore esy sentences *and* Iuggementz
 [3047] ¶ ffor it is writen / þat he þat moost curteisly
 comandeth / to hym men moost obeyen / [3048] And ther-
 fore I prey yow þat in this necessitee / *and* in this nede /
 ¶ Seneca ye caste yow to ouercome youre herte [3049] ¶ ffor Seneca
 seith /. That he þat ouercometh his herte / ouercometh
 ¶ Tullius twies [3050] ¶ And Tullius seith ¶ Ther is no thyng so
 comendable in a greet lord / [3051] as whan he is debon-
 aire *and* meeke / and appeseth lightly / [3052] And I. prey
 yow þat ye wole forbere now to do vengeance [3053] in
 swich a manere / þat youre goode name may be kept *and*
 conserued / [3054] and þat men mowe haue cause and
 mateere / to preyse yow of pitee *and* of mercy / [3055] and
 þat ye haue no cause to repente yow of thyng þat ye doon
 ¶ Seneca [3056] ¶ ffor Seneca seith ¶ He ouercometh in an yuel
 manere þat repenteth hym of his victorie / [3057] Where-
 fore I pray yow / lat mercy been in youre mynde *and* in
 youre herte / [3058] to theffect *and* entente þat god
 almyghty haue mercy on yow in his laste Iuggement: [3059]
 ¶ Iacobus in epistola ¶ ffor seint Iame seith in his Epistle ¶ Iuggement with-
 outen mercy shal be doon to hym / þat hath no mercy of
 another wight
 ¶ Melibee [3060] Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles
 and resoñs of Dame Prudence / and hire wise informacioñs
and techynges / [3061] his herte gan encline to the wil of
 his wif considerynge hir trewe entente / [3062] and con-
 formed hym anon and assented fully to werken after hir
 conseil / [3063] and thonked god / of whom procedeth al
 vertu and alle goodnesse / þat hym sente a wyf / of so greet
 discrecion [3064] And whan the day cam þat hise Aduer-
 saries sholde appieren in his presence / [3065] he spak vn-

to hem ful goodly / and seyde in this wyse [3066] ¶ Al be
 it so / þat of youre pride / and presumpciō *and* folie /
 and of youre necligence *and* vnkonnyng / [3067] ye haue
 mysborn yow and trespassed vn-to me. [3068] yet for as
 muche / as I see and biholde youre grete humylitee /
 [3069] and þat ye been sory and repentant of youre giltes /
 [3070] it constreyneth me / to doon yow grace and mercy
 [3071] ¶ Therefore / I receyue yow / to my grace [3072] and
 foryeue yow outrely alle the offenses / Iniuries and wronges
 þat ye haue doon agayn me and myne / [3073] to this
 effect and to this ende / that god of his endeles mercy
 [3074] wole at the tyme of oure dyngge foryeuen vs oure
 giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wretched
 world / [3075] ffor douteles / if we be sory and repentant
 of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the
 sighte of oure lord god / [3076] he is so free and so merci-
 able / [3077] that he wole foryeuen vs oure giltes [3078]
 and bryngen vs to his blisse / that neuere hath ende. Amen

¶ Heere is ended Chaucers tale of Melibee / and of
 Dame Prudence 

¶ The murye wordes of the Hoost/ to the Monk/ 
[on leaf 172]

Whan ended / was my tale / of Melibee 3079
 And of Prudence / and hire benignytee
 Oure hoost seyde / as I am feithful man
 And by that precious corpus Madrian
 I hadde leuere / than a barel ale

That good lief my wyf / hadde herd this tale 3084

She nys no thyng / of swich pacience

As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence

By goddes bones / whan I bete my knaues

She bryngeth me forth / the grete clobbed staues 3088

And crieth / slee the dogges euerichoon

And brek/ hem / bothe bak and euery boon

¶ And if that any neighebores of myne

Wol nat in chirche / to my wyf enclyne 3092

Or be so hardy / to hire to trespase

Whan she comth [home] / she rampeth in my face

And crieth / false coward / wreck thy wyf/

By corpus bones / I wol haue thy knyf/ 3096

And thou shalt haue my distaf and go spyne

ffro day to nyght / right thus she wol bigynne

Allas she seith / that euere þat I was shape

To wedden a Milksope / or a coward ape 3100

That wol been ouerlad with euery wight

Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyues right

¶ This is my lif but if that I wol fighte

And out at dore / anon I moot me dighte 3104

Or elles I am but lost but if that I

Be lik a wilde leon fool-hardy

I woot wel / she wol do me slee som day

Som neighebores / and thanne go my way 3108

ffor I am perilous / with knyf in honde

Al be it that I dar hire nat withstonde

ffor she is / byg in Armes by my feith
 That shal he fynde / þat hire mysdooth or seith 3112
 But lat vs passe away / fro this mateere
 ¶ My lord the Monk quod he / be myrie of cheere
 ffor ye shul telle a tale trowely
 Loo Rouchestre / stant heer faste by 3116
 Ryde forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game
 But by my trouthe / I knowe nat youre name
 Wher shal I calle yow / my lord daun Iohn
 Or daun Thomas / or elles daun Alboñ 3120
 Of what hous be ye / by youre fader kyn
 I vowe to god / thou hast a ful fair skyn
 It is a gentil pasture / ther thou goost^t [leaf 172, back]
 Thou art nat lyk^t a penant^t or a goost^t 3124
 Vpon my feith / thou art som Officer
 Som worthy sexteyn / or som Celerer
 ffor by my fader soule / as to my doom
 Thou art a maister / whan thou art at hoom 3128
 No poure cloystre/ ne no Novys
 But a gouernour / wily and wys
 And therwith-al / of brawnes and of bones
 A wel farynge persone / for the nones 3132
 I pray to god / yeue hym confusioun
 That first thee broghte / vn-to Religioun
 Thou woldest han been / a tredefowel aright^t
 Haddestow / as greet a leue / as thou hast myght^t 3136
 To parfourne al thy lust / in engendrure
 Thou haddest bigeten / ful many a creature
 Allas / why werestow / so wyd a Cope
 God yeue me sorwe / but and I were a pope 3140
 Nat oonly thou / but euery myghty man
 Though he were shorn / ful hye vpon his pan
 Sholde haue a wyf / for al the world is lorn
 Religioun / hath take vp al the corn 3144
 Of tredyngt. and we borel men been shrympes
 Of fiele trees / ther comen wrecched ymptes

[. <i>no gap in the MS.</i>]	3148
This maketh / that oure wyues wole assaye Religious folk' for ye mowe bettre paye Of Venus paiementz / than mowe we God woot' no lussheburgh payen ye	3152
But be nat wrooth / my lord for þat I pleye fful ofte in game / a sooth I haue herd seye ¶ This worthy Monk / took al in pacience And seyde I wol doon al my diligence	3156
As fer as sowneth / in-to honestee To telle yow a tale / or two / or three And if yow list' to herkne hyderward' I wol [yow] seyn the lyf / of saint Edward'	3160
Or ellis / first' Tragedies wol I telle Of whiche / I / haue an hundred in my Celle ¶ Tragedie is to seyn / a certeyn storie As olde bookes / maken vs memorie	3164
Of hym / that stood / in greet prosperitee And is yfallen / out of heigh degree In to myserie / and endeth wrecchedly And they ben versified communely	3168
Of .vj. feet. which men clepen Exametroñ In prose eek / been endited many oon And eek in meetre / in many a sondry wyse Lo / this declaryng' ogh̃te ynogh̃ suffise	3172
Now herkneth / if yow liketh for to heere But first / I yow biseeke / in this mateere Though I by ordre / telle nat thise thynges Be it of Popes / Emperours / or kynges	3176
After hir ages / as men writen fynde But tellen hem / som bifore <i>and</i> som bihynde As it now comth / vn-to my remembraunce Haue me excused of min ignoraunce	3180

¶ Explicit'

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Monkes tale / de casibus
virorum Illustrium. [on leaf 174]

Iwol biwaille / in manere of Tragedie *'Painting of the
Monk and two d^{ns}'*
The harm of hem / that stooode in heigh degree
And fillen so / that ther nas no remedie
To brynge hem / out of hir' aduersitee 3184
ffor certain / whan þat ffortune list to flee
Ther may no man / the cours of hire withholde
Lat no man truste / on blynd prosperitee
Be war of thise ensamples / trewe and olde 3188

[Lucifer.]

AT lucifer / though / he an Angel were ¶ Lucifer
And nat a man / at hym wol I bigynne
ffor though ffortune / may noon Angel dere
ffrom heigh degree / yet fel he for his synne 3192
Doun in to helle / where he yet is Inne
O Lucifer / brightest. of Angels alle
Now artow sathanas / þat mayst nat twynne
Out of miserie / in which þat thou art' falle 3196

[Adam.]

Loo Adam / in the feeld of Damysene ¶ Adam
With goddes owene fynger / wroght was he
And nat bigeten / of mannes sperme vnclene
And welte all Paradys / sauynge o tree 3200
Hadde neuere worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam / til he for mysgouernaunce
Was dryuen / out of hys hye prosperitee
To labour and to helle / and to meschaunce 3204

[*Sampson.*]

Loo Sampson / which that was Annunciāt ¶ Sampson
 By Angel / longe er his Natiuitee
 And was / to god almyghty consecrat
 And stood in noblesse / whil he myghte see 3208
 Was neuere / swich another as was hee
 To speke of strengthe / and ther-with hardynesse
 But to hise wyues / toolde he his secree 3211
 Thurgh which / he slow hym self / for wrecchednesse

Sampson / this noble almyghty Champion [leaf 173, back]
 With-outen wepene / saue his handes tweyne
 He slow / and al torente the leon
 Toward his weddyng walkyng by the weye 3216
 His false wyf / koude hym so plesse and preye
 Til she his conseil knew / and she vntrewe
 Vn-to hise foos / his conseil gan biwreye
 And hym forsook. and took another newe 3220

Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire
 And alle hir tayles / he togydre bond
 And sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire
 ffor he / on euery tayl / had knyht a bronk 3224
 And they brende / alle the cornes in that lond
 And alle hire Olyueres / and vynes eke
 A thousand men / he slow eek with his hond
 And hadde no wepene / but an Asses cheke 3228

Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / that he
 Was wel ny lorn / for which he gan to preye
 That god wolde / on his peyne han som pitee
 And sende hym drynke / or elles moste he deye 3232
 And of this asses cheke / that was dreye
 Out of a wang tooth / sprang anon a welle
 Of which he drank anon / shortly to seye
 Thus heelpē hym god / as Iudicum can telle 3236

By verray force / at Gazan / on a nyght
 Maugree Philistiens of that Citee
 The gates of the toun / he hath vp plyght
 And on his bak. yercyed hem hath hee 3240
 Hye on an hilt / þat men myghite hem see
 O noble almyghty Sampson / lief and deere
 Had thou nat toold / to wommen thy secree
 In all this world / ne hadde been thy peere 3244

This Sampson / neuere Ciser drank ne wyn
 Ne on his heed / cam rasour noon ne sheere
 By precept of the Messenger diuyn 3248
 ffor alle hise strengthes / in hise heeres weere
 And fully twenty wynter yeer by yeere
 He / hadde of Israel the gouernaunce
 But soone / shal he wepe many a teere
 ffor wommen / shal hym bryngen to meschance 3252

Vn-to his lemman Dalida he tolde
 That in hise heeris / al his strengthe lay
 And falsly to hise foomen / she hym solde
 ¶ And slepynge in hir barm / vp-on a day [leaf 17v] 3256
 She made to clippe / or shere / hise heres away
 And made hise foomen / al this craft espyen
 And whan þat they / hym foond in this array
 They bounde hym faste / and putten out hise eyen 3260

But er his heer/ were clipped or yshaue
 Ther was no boond / with which men myghite him bynde
 But now is he / in prison in a Caue
 Where as they made hym / at the Queerne grynde 3264
 O noble Sampson / strongest of mankynde
 O whilom / Iuge in glorie and in richesse
 Now maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde
 Sith thou fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse 3268

The ende of this caytyf was as I shal seye
 Hise foomen / made a feeste vp-on a day
 And made hym as a fool / biforn hem pleye
 And this was / in a temple of greet array 3272
 But atte laste / he made a foul affray
 ffor he / the pilers shook / and made hem falle
 And doun fil Temple and al / and ther it lay
 And slow hym self / and eek his foomen alle 3276

This is to seyn the Prynces euerichoon
 And eek / thre thousand bodyes were ther slayn
 With fallynge / of the grete Temple of stoon
 Of Sampson / now wol I na moore sayn 3280
 Beth war / by this ensample oold and playn
 That no men / telle hir conseil til hir wyues
 Of swich thyng' as they wolde han secree fayn
 If þat it touche / hir lymes or hir lyues 3284

[*Hercules.*]

Off Hercules / the souereyn Conquerour ¶ Hercules
 Syngen hise werkes / laude and heigh renoun
 ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour
 He slow / and rafte the skyn of the leoun 3288
 He of Centauros / leyde the boost adoun
 He Arpies slow / the crueel bryddes felle
 He golden Apples / refte of the dragoun
 He drow out Cerberus / the hound of helle 3292

He slow the crueel tyrant Busirus
 And made his hors / to frete hym flessħ and boon
 He slow / the firy serpent venymus
 Of Acheloy's hornes two / he brak' oon 3296
 And he slow Cacus / in a Caue of stoon
 He slow the geant' Antheus the stronge
 He slow the grisly boor / and that anon [leaf 174, back]
 And bar the heuene / on his nekke longe 3300

Was neuere wighȝ sith that this world bigan
 That slow so manye Monstres / as dide he
 Thurgh-out this wyde world / his name ran
 What for his strengthe / and for his heigh bountee 3304
 And euery Reawme / wente he for to see
 He was so stroong^r þat no man myghȝe hym lette
 At bothe the worldes endes / seith Trophee ¶ Ille vates Chalde-
 In stide of boundes / he a pileer sette ^{orum Tropheus} 3308

A lemman hadde / this noble Champion
 That highte Dianira / fressh as May
 And as thise clerkes / maken mention
 She hath hym sent. a sherte fressh and gay 3312
 Allas this sherte / allas and weylaway
 Euenymed was / so subtilly with-alle
 That er þat he / had wered it half a day
 It made his flessch / al from hise bones falle 3316

But nathelees / somme clerkes hire excusen
 By oon þat highte Nessus that it maked
 Be as be may / I wol hire noght accusen
 But on his bak^r this sherte he wered al naked 3320
 Til þat his flessch / was for the venym blaked
 And whan he saugh / noon oother remedye
 In hooȝe coles / he hath hym seluen raked
 ffor with no venym deigned hym to dye 3324

Thus starf / this worthy / myghty Hercules
 Lo / who may truste / on ffortune any throwe
 ffor hym þat folweth / al this world of prees
 Er he be war / is ofte yleyd ful lowe 3328
 fful wys is he / that kan hym seluen knowe
 Beth war^r / for whan that ffortune list to glose
 Thanne wayteth she / her man to ouerthrowe
 By swich a wey / as he wolde leest suppose 3332

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

The myghty trone / the precious tresor ¶ Nabugo-
 The glorious ceptre / and Roial magestee donosor
 That hadde the kyng Nabugodonosor
 With tonge / vnnethe may discryued bee 3336
 He twyes / wan Ierusalem the Citee
 The vessel of the temple / he with hym ladde
 At Babiloigne / was his souereyn see
 In which his glorie / and his delit he hadde 3340

The faireste children / of the blood Roial [leaf 175]
 Of Israel / he leet do gelde anoon
 And maked ech of hem / to been his thral
 Amonges othere / Daniel was oon 3344
 That was the wiseste child of euerychon
 ffor he / the dremes of the kyng expowned
 Where as in Chaldeye / clerk ne was ther noon
 That wiste / to what fyn / hise dremes sowned 3348

This proude kyng leet maken a statue of gold
 Sixty cubites long and seuene in brede
 The which ymage / he bothe yonge and oold
 Comanded to loute / and haue in drede 3352
 Or in a flourneys / ful of flambes rede
 He shal be brent that wolde noghit obeye
 But neuere wolde assente / to that dede
 Daniel / ne hise yonge felawes tweye 3356

This kyng of kynges / proud was and elaat
 He wende / pat god that sit in magestee
 Ne myghite / hym nat bireue of his estaat
 But sodeynly / he loste his dignytee 3360
 And lyk a beest / hym semed for to bee
 And cet hey as an Oxe / and lay ther oute
 In reyn / with wilde beestes walked hee
 Til certein tyme / was ycome aboute 3364

And lik/ an Egles fetheres / wax his heres
 Hise nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere
 Til god releessed hym / a certeyn yeres
 And yaf hym wit / and thanne *with* many a teere 3368
 He thanked god / and euere his lyf in feere
 Was he / to doon amys / or moore trespase
 And til that tyme / he leyd was on his beere
 He knew / that god was / ful of myght *and* grace 3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

His sone / which that highte Balthasar ¶ Balthasar
 That heeld the regne / after his fader day
 He by his fader / koude noghit be war
 ffor proud he was / of herte and of array 3376
 And eek / an ydolastre / he was ay
 His hye estaat assured hym in pryde
 But ffortune / caste hym down / and ther he lay
 And sodeynly / his regne gan diuide 3380

A feeste he made / vn-to hise lordes alle
 Vp-on a tyme / and bad hem blithe bee
 And thanne / hise Officers gan he calle
 Gooth bryngeth forth / the vessels quod he [leaf 175, back]
 Whiche that my fader / in his prosperitee 3385
 Out of the temple / of Ierusalem biraft
 And to oure hye goddes / thanke we
 Of honour / that oure eldres *with* us lafte 3388

Hys wyf hise lordes / and hise concubynes
 Ay dronken / whil hire Appetites laste
 Out of thise noble vessels / sondry wyues
 And on a wal / this kyng hise eyen caste 3392
 And saugh an hand Armlees / þat wroot ful fast
 ffor feere of which / he quook' and siked soore
 This hand / that Balthasar so soore agaste
 Wroot *Mane* techel phares / and na moore 3396

In al that land / Magicien was noon
 That koude expounde / what this lettre mente
 But Daniel / expowned it anon
 And seyde kyng' god to thy fader sente 3400
 Glorie and honour / regne / tresour / rente
 And he was proud / and no-thing' god ne dradde
 And therfore / god greet wreche vp-on hym sente
 And hym birafte / the regne þat he hadde 3404

He was out cast' of mannes compaignye
 With asses / was his habitacioun
 And eet hey as a beest' in weet and drye
 Til that he knew / by grace and by resoun 3408
 That god of heuene / hath domynacioun
 Ouer euery regne / and euery creature
 And thanne / hadde god of hym compassioun
 And hym restored / his regne and his figure 3412

Eek / thou that art' his sone / art proud also
 And knowest' alle thise thynges verrailly
 And art rebel to god / and art his foo
 Thou drank eek / of hise vessels boldely 3416
 Thy wyf eek' and thy wenches synfully
 Dronke of the same vessels / sondry wynys
 And heryest' false goddes cursedly
 Therefore to thee / yshapen ful greet pyne ys 3420

This hand was sent from god / that on the wal
 Wroot' Mane techel phares / truste me
 Thy regne is doon / thou weyest' noght' at al
 Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be 3424
 To Medes and to Perses [yeue] quod he
 And thilke same nyght' this kyng' was slawe
 And Darius / occupieth his degre [leaf 176]
 Thogh he therto / hadde neither right ne lawe 3428

Lordynges / ensample / heer-by may ye take
 How that in lordshipe / is no sikernesse
 ffor whan ffortune wole a man forsake
 She bereth away / his regne and his richesse 3432
 And eek' hise freendes / bothe moore and lesse
 ffor what man / þat hath freendes / thurgh ffortune
 Mishape / wol maken hem enemys as I gesse
 This prouerbe / is ful sooth and ful commune 3436

[*Zenobia.*]

CEnobia / of Palymerie Qucene ¶ Cenobia
 As writen Persiens / of hir noblesse
 So worthy was in Armes / and so keene
 That no wight passed hire in hardynesse 3440
 Ne in lynage / nor in oother gentillesse
 Of kynges blood of Perce / is she descended
 I seye nat' that she hadde moost fairnesse
 But of hire shape / she myghte nat been amended 3444

from hire childhede / I fynde that she fledde
 Office of wommen / and to wode she went
 And many a wilde hertes blood she shedde
 With arwes brode / that she to hem sente 3448
 She was so swift / þat she anon hem hente
 And whan þat she was elder / she wolde kille
 Leofis / leopardes / and Beres al to-rente
 And in hir Armes / weekde hem at hir wille 3452

She dorste / wilde beestes dennes seke
 And rennen in the montaignes al the nyght
 And slepen vnder the bussh / and she koude eke
 Wrastlen / by verray force / and verray myght / 3456
 With any yong man / were he neuer so wight
 Ther myghte no thyng' in hir Armes stonde
 She kepte hir maydenhoof / from euery wight
 To no man / deigned hire for to be bonde 3460

But atte laste / hir freendes han hire married
 To Onedake / a Prynce of that contree
 Al were it so / that she hem longe taried
 And ye shul vnderstonde / how that he^e 3464
 Hadde swiche fantasies / as hadde she^{simul}
 But nathelees / whan they were knyght infeere
 They lyued / in ioye / and in felicitee
 ffor ech of hem / hadde oother lief and deere 3468

Sauē o thyng^t that she wolde neuere assente [leaf 176, back]
 By no wey / that he sholde by hire lye
 But ones / for it was hir pleyn entente
 To haue a child^t / the world to multiplie 3472
 And also soone / as þat she myghite espye
 That she was nat with childe / with that dede
 Thanne wolde she suffre hym / doon his fantasye
 Eft soone / and nat but oones out of drede 3476

And if she were with childe / at thilke cast^t
 Na moore / sholde he pleyen thilke game
 Til fully / fourty dayes / weren past^t
 Thanne wolde she ones / suffre hym do the same 3480
 Al were this Onedake / wilde or tame
 He gat na moore of hire / for thus she seyde
 It was to wyues / lecherie and shame
 In oother caas / if þat men with hem pleyde 3484

Two sones / by Onedake hadde she
 The whiche she kepte / in vertu and lettrure
 But now / vn-to oure tale / turne we
 I seye / so worshipful a creature 3488
 And wys ther-with / and large with mesure
 So penyble in the werre / and curteis eke
 Ne moore labour / myghite in werre endure
 Was noon / though al this world men wolde seke 3492

Hir riche array / ne myghte nat be told
 As wel in vessel / as in hire clothyng
 She was al clad / in perree and in gold
 And eek / she lafte noght / for noon huntyng 3496
 To haue of sondry tonges / ful knowyng
 Whan þat she leyser hadde / and for to entende
 To lerne bookes / was al hire likyng
 How she in vertu / myghte hir lyf dispende 3500

And shortly / of this proces for to trete
 So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she
 That they conquered / manye regnes grete
 In the Orient with many a faire Citee 3504
 Apertenaunt vn-to the magesteo
 Of Rome / and with strong hond held hem ful faste
 Ne neuere myghte / hir foo men doon hem flee
 Ay / whil that Onedakes dayes laste 3508

Hir batailles / who so list hem for to rede
 Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo
 And how al this proces / fil in dede
 Why she conquered / and what title therto [leaf 177] 3512
 And after / of hir meschief and hire wo
 How þat she was / biseged and ytake
 Lat hym / vn-to my maister Petrak go
 That writ ynough of this .I vndertake 3516

Whan Onedake was deed / she myghtily
 The regnes heeld / and with hire propre hond
 Agayn hir foos / she faught so cruelly
 That ther nas kyng ne prynce in al that lond 3520
 That he nas glad / if he that grace fond
 That she ne wolde / vp-on his lond werreye
 With hire / they made alliance by bond
 To been in pees / and lete hire ride and pleye 3524

The Emperour of Rome Claudius
 Ne hym bifore / the Romayn Galien
 Ne dorste neuere / been so corageus
 Ne noon Ermyn / ne noon Egipcien 3528
 Ne Surrien / ne noon Arabyen

With-Inne the feeldes / that dorste *with* hire fighte
 Lest that she wolde / hem *with* hir handes slen
 Or with hir meignee / putten hem to flighte 3532

In kynges habit / wente hir sones two
 As heires / of hir fadres regnes alle
 And hermanno / and Thymalao
 Hir names were / as *Persiens* hem calle 3536
 But ay ffortune / hath in hire hony galle
 This myghty queene / may no while endure
 ffortune / out of hir regne made hire falle
 To wrecchednesse / and to mysaventure 3540

Aurelian / whan that the *gouvernaunce*
 Of Rome / cam in-to hise handes tweye
 He shoope / vp-on this queene to doon vengeaunce
 And with hise legions / he took his weye 3544
 Toward Cenobie / and shortly for to seye
 He made hire flee / and atte last hire hente
 And fettred hire / and eek hire children tweye
 And wan the land / and hoom to Rome he wente 3548

Amonges othere thynges / that he wan
 Hir Chaar/ *pat* was *with* gold wrought and perree
 This grete Romayn / this Aurelian
 Hath *with* hym lad / for that men sholde it see 3552
 Biforn his triumphe / walketh shee
 With gilte cheynes / on hire nekke hangyng
 Coroned was she / after hir degree [leaf 177, back]
 And ful of perree / charged hire clothynge 3556

Allas fortune / she that whilom was
 Dredeful / to kynges and to Emperoures
 Now gaureth al the peple / on hire allas
 And she / that helmed was in starke shoures 3560
 And wan by force / townes stronge *and* toures
 Shal on hir heed / now were a vitremyte
 And she that bar / the ceptre ful of floures
 Shal bere a distaf / hire costes for to quyte 3564

[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

[Nero.]

Al though / that Nero were vicious ¶ Nero
 As any feend that lith in helle adoun 3654
 Yet he / as telleth vs Swetonius
 This wyde world / hadde in subieccioun 3656
 Bothe Est *and* West North / and Septemtrioun
 Of Rubies / saphires / and of peerles white
 Were alle hise clothes / brouded vp and down
 ffor he in gemmes / greetly gan delite 3660

Moore delicaat moore pompous of array
 Moore proud / was neuere Emperour than he
 That ilke clooth / þat he hadde wered o day
 After that tyme / he nolde it neuere see 3664
 Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plentee
 To fische in Tybre / whan hym liste pleye
 Hise lustes were al lawe / in his decree
 ffor fortune / as his freend / hym wolde obeye 3668

He Rome brende / for his delicacie
 The Senatours / he slow vp-on a day
 To heere / how men wolde wepe and crie
 And slow his brother / and by his suster lay 3672
 His mooder made he / in pitous array
 ffor he / hire wombe slitte / to biholde
 Where he conceyued was so weilaway
 That he so litel / of his mooder tolde 3676

No teere out of hise eyen / for that sighte
 Ne cam / but seyde / a fair womman was she
 Greet wonder is / how þat he koude / or myghte
 Be domesman / of hire dede beautee 3680
 The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he
 And drank / anon / noon oother wo he made
 Whan myght is ioyned vn-to crueltee
 Allas to depe / wol the venym wade 3684

In yowthe / a maister hadde this Emperour [leaf 176]
 To teche hym lettrure / and curteisye
 ffor of moralitee / he was the flour
 As in his tyme / but if bookes lye 3688
 And whil this maister / hadde of hym maistrye
 He maked hym / so konnyng' and so sowple
 That longe tyme it was / er tirannye
 Or any vice / dorste on hym vncowple 3692

This Seneca / of which that I deuyse
 By cause Nero / hadde of hym swich drede
 ffor he fro vices / wolde hym chastise
 Discreetly / as by word / and nat by dede 3696
 Sire wolde he seyn / an Emperour moot nede
 Be vertuous / and hate tirannye
 ffor which / he in a bath / made hym to blede
 On bothe hise Armes / til he moste dye 3700

This Nero / hadde eek / of acustumaunce
 In youthe / agayns his maister for to ryse
 Which afterward / hym thoughte greet greuaunce
 Therefore / he made hym dyen in this wise 3704
 But natheles / this Seneca the wise
 Chees in a Bath to dye / in this manere
 Rather than han / any oother tormentise
 And thus hath Nero / slayn his maister decre 3708

Now fil it so / that ffortune liste no lenger
 The hye pryde of Nero to cherice
 ffor though þat he was strong^r yet was she streng^r
 She thoughte thus / by god I am to nyce 3712
 To sette a man / that is fulfild of vice
 In heigh degree / and Emperour hym calle
 By god / out of his sete / I wol hym trice
 Whan he leest^r weneth / sonnest shal he falle 3716

The peple roos vp-on hym on a nyght
 ffor his defeaute / and whan he it espied
 Out of hise dores / anon he hath hym dight^r
 Allone / and ther he wende han ben allied 3720
 He knocked faste / and ay the moore he cried
 The fastere shette they / the dores alle
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he dyed
 And wente his wey / no lenger dorste he calle 3724

The peple cride / and rombled vp and down
 That w^{it}h his crys / herde he / how they seyde
 Where is this false tiraunt^r this Neroun
 ffor fere / almoost^r out of his wit he breyde [leaf 178, back]
 And to hise goddes / pitously he preyd
 ffor socour / but it myghte nat bityde
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he deyde
 And ran in-to a gardyn hym to hyde 3732

And in this gardyn / foond he cherles tweye
 That seten by a fyr / greet and reed^r
 And to thise cherles two / he gan to preye
 To sleen hym / and to girden of his hee^r 3736
 That to his body / whan þat he were deef^r
 Were no despit ydoon / for his defame
 Hym self he slow / he koude no bettre reed^r
 Of which / ffortune lough / and hadde a game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

W as neuere Capitayn / vnder a kyng/ ¶ De Oloferno
 That regnes mo / putte in subieccioun
 Ne strengre was in feeld / of alle thyng
 As in his tyme / ne gretter of renoun 3744
 Ne moore pompous / in heigh presumeioun
 Than Oloferne / which ffortune ay kiste
 So likerously / and ladde hym vp and doun
 Til þat his heed was of / er þat he wiste 3748

Nat oonly / that this world / hadde hym in Awe
 ffor lesynge / of richesse / or libertee
 But made euery man / reneyen his lawe
 Nabugodonosor / was god seyde hee 3752
 Noon oother god / [ne] sholde adoured bee
 Agayns his heeste / no wight dorste trespae
 saue in Bethulia / a strong Citee

Where Eliachim / a preest was of that place
¶ Et fecerunt filij
 Israel secundum
 quod constituerat
 eis sacerdos domi-
 ni Eliachim. [t. i. Joacim, Judith iv. 8.]

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne
 Amydde his hoost he dronke lay a nyght
 With-Inne his tente / large as is a berne
 And yet for al his pompe / and al his myght 3760
 Iudith a womman / as he lay vpright
 Slepynge / his heed of smoot and from his tente
 ffyl pryuely / she stal from euery wight
 And with his heed / vn-to hir toun she wente 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

W hat nedeth it of kyng Anthiochus ¶ De Rege An-
 To telle / his hye Roial magestee thiocho illustri
 His hye pride / hise werkes venymus
 ffor swich another / was ther noon as he 3768
 Rede which þat he was / in Machabee
 And rede / the proude wordes that he seyde
 And why he fil / fro heigh prosperitee [leaf 179]
 And in an hiß / how wrecchedly he deyde 3772

ffortune / hym hadde enhaunced so in pride
 That verraily / he wende he myghite attayne
 Vn-to the sterres / vp-on euery syde
 And in balance / weyen ech montayne 3776
 And alle the floodes / of the see restrayne
 And goddes peple / hadde he moost in hate
 Hem wolde he sleen / in torment and in payne
 Wenyng / þat god ne myghite his pride abate 3780

And for that Nichanore / and Thymothee
 Of Iewes / weren venquysshed myghtily
 Vn-to the Iewes / swich an hate hadde he 3784
 That he bad / greithen his Chaar ful hastily
 And swoor / and seyde ful despitously
 Vn-to Ierusalem / he wolde eft soone
 To wreken his Ire / on it ful cruelly
 But of his purpos / he was let ful soone 3788

God for his manace / hym so soore smoot
 With invisible wounde / ay incurable
 That in hise guttes / carf it so and boot
 That hise peynes / weren importable 3792
 And certainly / the wreche was resonable
 ffor many a mannes guttes / dide he peyne
 But from his purpos / cursed and dampnable
 ffor all his smert he wolde hym nat restreyne 3796

But bad anon / apparailen his hoost
 And sodeynly / er he was of it war
 God daunted / al his pride and all his boost
 ffor he so soore / fil out of his Char 3800
 That it hise lemes / and his skyn to-tar
 So that he neyther / myghite go ne ryde
 But in a chayer / men / aboute hym bar
 Al forbrused / bothe bak and syde 3804

The wreche of god / hym smoot so cruelly
 That thurgh his body / wikked wormes crepte
 And ther-with-al / he stank' horribly
 That noon of al his meynē / þat hym kepte 3808
 Wheither so he wook' or ellis slepte
 Ne mygh̃te noght' for stynk' of hym endure
 In this meschief / he wayled and eek wepte
 And knew god / lord of euery creature 3812

To all his hoost' and to hym self also [leaf 179, back]
 fful wlatson was / the stynk' of his careyne
 No man / ne mygh̃te hym bere / to ne fro
 And in this stynk' and this horrible peyne 3816
 He starf ful wrecchedly / in a Monteyne
 Thus hath this Robbour / and this homycide
 That many a man / made to wepe and pleyne
 Swich gerloñ / as bilongeth vn-to pryde 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

The storie of Alisaundre / is so commune ¶ De Alex-
 That euery wight' that hath discrecioun andro
 Hath herd somewhat' or al / of his ffortune
 This wyde world / as in conclusioun 3824
 He wan by strengthe / or for his hye renoun
 They weren glad / for pees vn-to hym sende
 The pride / of man and beest / he leyde adoun
 Wher so he cam / vn-to the worldes ende 3828

Comparisoñ / mygh̃te neuere yet been maked
 Bitwixen hym / and another Conquerour
 ffor al this world / for drede of hym hath quaked
 He [was] of knyghthoð' and of fredom flour 3832
 fortune hym made / the heir of hire honour
 Saue wyn and wommen / no man mighte aswage
 His hye entente in Armes and labour
 So was he ful / of leonyn corage 3836

What pris were it to hym / though I yow tolde
 Of Darius / and an hundred thousand mo
 Of kynges / princes / Erles / dukes / bolde
 Whiche he conquered / and broghte hem in-to wo 3840
 I seye / as fer as man may ryde or go
 The world was his / what sholde I moore deuysel
 ffor though I write / or tolde yow eueremo
 Of his knyghthode / it myghite nat suffise 3844

Twelf yeer he regned / as seith Machabee
 Philippes sone of Macidoynes he was
 That first was kyng in Grece the contree
 O worthy gentil Alisandre allas 3848
 That euere sholde fallen swich a cas
 Empeysoned / of thyn owene folk thou weere
 Thy sys / ffortune / hath turned in-to Aas
 And [yet] for thee / ne weepe she neuer a teere 3852

Who shal me yeuen teeris to compleyne
 The deeth of gentillesse / and of franchise
 That al the world / weelded in his demeyne
 And yet hym thoughte / it myghite nat suffise [leaf 100] 3856
 So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise
 Allas / who shal me helpe to endite
 ffalse ffortune / and poyson to despise
 The whiche two / of al this wo I wylte 3860

[*Julius Cæsar.*]

By wisdom / manhede / and by labour ¶ De Iulio
 ffrom humble bed / to roial magestee Cesare
 Vp roos he Iulius the Conquerour
 That wan al thoccident by land and See 3864
 By strengthe of hand / or elles by trettee
 And vn-to Rome / made hem tributarie
 And sitthe of Rome / the Emperour was he
 Til that ffortune / weex his Aduersarie 3868

O myghty Cesar / that in Thessalie
 Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lawe
 That of the Orient hadde all the Chiualrie
 As fer/ as þat the day bigynneth dawē 3872
 Thou thurgh thy knyghthod / hast hem take and slawe
 Saue fewe folk / that with Pompeus fledde
 Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in Awe
 Thanke ffortune / that so wel thee spedde 3876

¶ But now a litel while / I wol biwaille ¶ Nota de Pompeyo
 This Pompeus / this noble gouvernour
 Of Rome / which that fleigh at this bataille
 I seye / oon of hise men / a fals traitour 3880
 His heed of smoot to wynnē hym fauour
 Of Iulius / and hym the heed he broghte
 Allas Pompeye / of Thorient Conquerour
 That ffortune / vn-to swich a fyn thee broghte 3884

¶ To Rome agayn / repaireth Iulius
 With his triumphe / lauriat ful hye
 But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius
 That euere hadde / of his hye estaat envye 3888
 fful priuely / hath maad conspiracye
 Agayns this Iulius / in subtil wise
 And caste the place / in which he sholde dye
 With Boydekyns / as I shal yow deuyse 3892

This Iulius / to the Capitolie wente
 Vpon a day / as he was wont to goon
 And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente
 This false Brutus / and liise othere foon 3896
 And stiked hym / with boydekyns anoon
 With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye
 But neuere gronte he / at no strook but oon [leaf 180, back]
 Or elles at two / but if his storie lye 3900

So manly / was this Iulius of herte
 And so wel louede / estaatly honestee
 That though hise deedly woundes soore smerte
 His Mantel / ouer hise hypes caste he 3904
 ffor no man / sholde seen his priuete
 And as he lay / of diyng' in a traunce
 And wiste verraily / that deed was hee
 Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce 3908

Lucan / to thee / this storie I recomende
 And to Sweton / and to Valerius also
 That of this storie / writen word and ende
 How þat / to thise grete Conquerours two 3912
 ffortune was first freend / and sitthe foo
 No man ne truste / vp-on hire fauour longe
 But haue hire / in awayt' for euere moo
 Witnesse / on alle thise Conquerours stronge 3916

[*Cresus.*]

This riche Cresus / whilom kyng' of Lyde ¶ Cresus
 Of which Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde
 Yet was he caught / amyddes al his pryde
 And to be brent / men to the fyr hym ladde 3920
 But swich a reyn / doun fro the welkne shadde
 That slow the fyr / and made hym to escape
 But to be war / no grace yet he halde
 Til ffortune / on the galwes / made hym gape 3924

Whanne he escaped was / he kan nat stente
 ffor to bigynne / a newe werre agayn
 He wende wel / for þat ffortune hym sente
 Swich hape / that he escaped thurgh the rayn 3928
 That of hise foos / he myghte nat be slayn
 And eek a sweuene / vp-on a nyght he mette
 Of which / he was so proud / and eek so fayn
 That in vengeance / he al his herte sette 3932

279, 280, 268 SIX-TEXT

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

Vp-on a tree / he was / as that hym thoughte
Ther Iuppiter hym wesshe / bothe bak' and syde
And Phebus eek' a fair towaille hym broughte
To dryen hym with / and therfore wax his pryde 3936
And to his doghter / that stood hym bisyde
Which þat he knew / in heigh science habounde
He bad hire telle hym / what it signifyde
And she his dreem / bigan right thus expounde 3940

The tree quod she / the galwes is to meene [leaf 181]
And Iuppiter / bitokneth snow and reyn
And Phebus / with his towaille so clene
Tho been / the sonne bemes for to seyn 3944
Thou shalt anhangd be / fader certeyn
Reyn shal thee wasshe / and sonne shal thee drye
Thus warnd hym / ful plat' and ful pleyn
His doghter / which that called was Phanye 3948

An-hangd was Cresus / the proude kyng'
His roial Trone / myghȝte hym nat auaille
Tragedies / noon oother maner thyng /
Ne kan in syngyng' crie ne biwaille 3952
But that ffortune / alwey wole assaille
With vnwar strook' / the Regnes þat been proude
ffor whan men trusteth hire / thanne wol she faille
And couere hire brighte face / with a clowde 3956

[These 4 modern instances should follow Zenobia, p. 208.]

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

O noble / o. worthy Petro / glorie of Spayne ¶ De Petro
Whom ffortune heeld / so hye in magestee Rege Is-
Wel oghten men / thy pitous deeth complayne pannie
Out of thy land / thy brother made thee flee 3568
And after / at a sege by subtiltee
Thou were bitraysed / and lad vn-to his tente
Where as he / with his owene hand slow thee
Succedyng / in thy regne and in thy rente 3572

ELLESMEERE 500 (6-T. 279, 280, 268)

The feeld of snow / with thegle of blak ther-Inne [Bertrand c's
Guesclin.]

Caught with the lymerod / coloured as the gleede

He brew this cursednesse / and al this synne

The wikked nest was werker of this nede 3576

Noght Charles Olyuver / that took ay heede

Of trouthe and honour / but of Armorike [Ohoer de Mauny
of Brittany.]

Genylon Olyuer / corrupt for meede

Broghte this worthy kyng in swich a brike 3580

O [Peter of Cyprus.]

worthy Petro / kyng of Cipe also ¶ De Petro

That Alisandre wan / by heigh maistrie Rege de
Cipro

ful many an hethen / wroghtestow ful wo

Of which / thyne owene liges hadde envie 3584

And for no thyng but for thy Chiualrie

They in thy bed / han slayn thee by the morwe

Thus kan ffortune / hir wheel gouerne and gye

And out of Ioye / brynge men to sorwe 3588

[Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.]

Off Melan / grete Barnabo Viscounte ¶ De Barnabo

God of delit. and scourge of Lumbardye de Lumbardia

Why sholde I nat thyn Infortune acounte

Sith in estaat / thow cloumbe were so hye [leaf 181, back]

Thy brother sone / that was thy double allye

ffor he thy Nevew was / and sone in lawe

With-Inne his prison / made thee to dye

But why ne how / noot I þat thou were slawe 3596

[Ugolino, Count of Pisa.]

Off the Erl Hugelyn of Pyze / the langour ¶ De Hugelino

Ther may no tonge / telle for pitee Comite

But litel out of Pize / stant a tour de Pize

In which tour / in prison put was he 3600

And with hym / been hise litel children thre

The eldeste / scarsly / fyf yeer was of Age

Allas ffortune / it was greet crueltee

Swiche briddes / for to putte / in swiche a Cage 3604

Dampned was he / to dyen in that prisoñ
 ffor Roger / which þat Bisshope was of Pize
 Hadde on hym maad / a fals suggestioñ
 Thurgh which / the peple / gan vpon hym rise 3608
 And putten hym to prisoñ / in swich wise
 As ye han herd / and mete / and drynke he hadde
 So smal / that vnnethe it may suffice
 And therwith-al / it was ful poure and badde 3612

And on a day / bifil / þat in that hour
 Whan þat his mete / wont was to be broght
 The Gayler shette the dores of the tour
 He herde it wel / but he spak right noght 3616
 And in his herte / anon ther fil a thoght/
 That they for hunger / wolde doon hym dyen
 Allas quod he / allas that I was wroght
 Ther-with / the teeris fillen from hise eyen 3620

His yonge sone / that thre yeer was of age
 Vn-to hym seyde / fader / fader // why do ye wepe
 Whanne wol the Gayler / bryngen oure potage
 Is ther no morsel breed / that ye do kepe 3624
 I am so hungry / that I may nat slepe
 Now wolde god / that I myghte slepen euere
 Thanne sholde nat hunger / in my wombe crepe
 Ther is no thyng but breed / that me were leuere 3628

Thus day by day / this child bigan to crye
 Til in his fadres barm / adoun it lay
 And seyde / fare wel fader / I moot dye
 And kiste his fader / and dyde the same day 3632
 And whan the woful fader / deed it say
 ffor wo / hise Armes two / he gan to byte
 And seyde / Allas ffortune and weylaway [leaf 182]
 Thy false wheel / my wo al may I wyte 3636

Hise children wende / that it for hunger was
 That he hise Armes gnou / and nat for wo
 And seyde fader / do nat so Allas
 But rather ete the flessch vp-on vs two 3640
 Oure flessch thou yaf /. take oure flessch vs fro
 And ete ynogh / right thus they to hym seyde
 And after that with-Inne a day or two
 They leyde hem / in his lappe adoun and deyde 3644

Hym-self despeired / eek for hunger starf
 Thus ended is / this myghty Erl of Pize
 ffrom heigh estaat ffortune away hym carf
 Of this Tragedie / it' oghte ynough suffise 3648
 Who so wol here it' in a lenger wise
 Redeth / the grete Poete of ytaille
 That highte Dant'. for he kan al deuyse
 ffrom point to point'. nat o word wol he faille 3652

¶ Explicit Tragedia

¶ Heere stynteth the Knyght the Monk of his tale. 𐀚

¶ The prologue of the Nonnes preestes tale ^[on leaf 182]

Hoo quod the knyght / good sire namoore this
 That ye han seyde / is right ynough ywis
 And muchel moore / for litel heuynesse
 Is right ynough / to mucche folk I gesse 3960
 I seye for me / it is a greet diseise
 Where as men han been / in greet welthe and ese
 To heeren / of hire sodeyn fal allas
 And the contrarie / is ioye and greet solas 3964
 As whan a man / hath ben in poure estaat
 And clymbeth vp / and wexeth fortunat
 And there abideth / in prosperitee
 Swich thyng is gladsom / as it thynketh me 3968
 And of swich thyng. were goodly for to telle
 Ye quod oure hoost by seint Poules belle
 ye seye right sooth this Monk / he clappeth lowde
 He spak. how ffortune / couered with a clowde 3972
 ¶ I noot neuere what / and also of a Tragedie ^[leaf 182, back]
 Right now ye herde / and pardee no remedie
 It is / for to biwaille / ne compleyne
 That þat is doon / and als it is a payne 3976
 As ye han seyde / to heere of heuynesse
 ¶ Sire monk. namoore of this / so god yow blesse
 Youre tale / anyeth all this compaignye
 Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye 3980
 ffor ther-Inne is ther / no desport ne game
 ¶ Wherefore sire Monk daun Piers by youre name
 I pray yow hertely / telle vs somewhat elles
 ffor sikerly nere clynkyng of youre belles 3984

That on youre bridel hange / on euery syde
 By heuene kyng. that for vs alle dyde
 I sholde er this / han fallen doun for sleepe
 Al-though the slough / had neuer been so deepe 3988
 Thanne hadde your tale / al be toold in veyn
 ffor certainly / as that thise clerkes seyn
 Where as a man / may hane noon Audiance
 Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence 3992
 And wel I woot the substance is in me
 If any thyng shal wel reported be
 Sir / sey somewhat of huntynge I yow preye
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk / I hane no lust to pleye 3996
 Now lat another telle / as I hane toold
 Thanne spak oure hoost with rude speche and boold
 And seyde / vn-to the Nonnes preest anon
 Com neer thou preest. com hyder thou sir Iohn 4000
 Telle vs swich thyng as may oure hertes glade
 Be blithe / though thou ryde vp-on a lade
 What though thyn hore / be bothe foule and lene
 If he wol serue thee / rekke nat a bene 4004
 Looke / that thyn herte / be murie eueremo
 ¶ Yis sir quod he / yis hoost so moot I go
 But I be myrie / ywis I wol be blamed
 And right anon / his tale he hath attamel 4008
 And thus he seyde / vn-to vs euerichon
 This sweete preest. this goodly man sir Iohn

¶ Explicit

[6 lines blank in the MS]

[leaf 183]

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Nonnes Preestes tale of
the Cok and Hen Chauntecleer and Pertelote

A poure wydwe / somdel stape in Age
Was whilom dwellyng^t. in a narwe cotate 4012
Beside a greue / stondynge in a dale
This wydwe / of which I telle yow my tale
Syn thilke day / that she was last a wyf/ [Painting of the
Nun's Priest]
In pacience / ladde a ful symple lyf/ 4016
ffor litel / was hir catel and hir rente
By housbondrie / of swich as god hire sente
She foond hir self / and eek hire doghtren two
Thre large sowes / hadde she and namo 4020
Three keene / and eek a sheep þat highite Malle
fful sooty / was hir bour/ and eek hire halle
In which she eet^t ful many a sklendre Meel
Of poynaunt sauce / hir neded neuer a deel 4024
No deyntee morsel / passed thurgh^h hir throte
Hir diete / was accordant^t to hir Cote
Repleccion / ne made hire neuere sik /
Attempre^e diete / was al hir phisik / 4028
And exercise / and hertes suffisaunce
The goute / lette hire no-thing^t for to daunce
Napoplexie / shente nat hir heed^t
No wyn ne drank / she / neither whit ne reed^t 4032
Hir bord was serued moost^t with whit and blak^t
Milk^t and broun breed / in which she foond no lak^t
Seynd Bacon / and somtyme an Ey or tweye
ffor she was / as it were / a maner deye 4036
¶ A yeerd^t she hadde / enclosed al aboute
With stikkes / and a drye dych with-oute
In which / she hadde a Cok^t heet^t Chauntecleer
In al the land^t / of crowyng nas his peer 4040

His voys was murier/ than the murie Orgon
 On Messedayes / that in the chirche gon
 Wel sikerer/ was his crowyng' in his logge
 Than is a Clokke / or an abbey Orlogge 4044
 By nature / he crew eche Ascencioun
 Of the equynoxial in thilke toun
 ffor whan degrees fiftene weren ascended
 Thanne crew he / that it myghte nat been amended 4048
 His Coomb was redder / than the fyn coral
 And batailled / as it were a Castel wal
 His byle was blak' and as the Iet it shoon
 Lyk Asure / were hise legges and his toon 4052
 Hise nayles / whiter than the lylve flour
 And lyk' the burned gold / was his colour
 This gentil Cok'. hadde in his gouernaunce [leaf 183, back]
 Seuene hennes / for to doon al his plesaunce 4056
 Whiche were / hise sustres and his paramours
 And wonder lyk' to hym / as of colours
 Of whiche / the faireste hewed / on hir throte
 Was cleped / faire damoysele Pertelote 4060
 Curteys she was / discreet and debonaire
 And compaignable / and bar hyr self so faire
 Syn thilke day / þat she was seuene nyght oold
 That trewely / she hath the herte in hoolde 4064
 Of Chauntecleer / loken in euery lith
 He loued hire so / þat wel was hym therwith
 But swiche a ioye was it to here hem synge
 Whan þat / the brighte sonne / bigan to sprynge 4068
 In sweete accord / My lief is faren in londe
 ffor thilke tyme / as I haue vnderstonde
 Beestes and briddes / koude speke and synge
 ¶ And so bifel / that in the dawenyng 4072
 As Chauntecleer / among hise wyues alle
 Sat on his perche / that was in the halle
 And next hym / sat this faire Pertelote
 This Chauntecleer / gan gronen in his throte 4076

As man þat in his dreem / is drecched soore
 ¶ And whan that Pertelote / thus herde hym roore
 She was agast and seyde o herte deere
 What eyleth yow / to grone in this manere 4080
 Ye been a verray sleper / fy for shame
 ¶ And he answerde / and seyde thus ? / madame
 I pray yow / that ye take it nat agrief
 By god me thoughte / I was in swich meschief 4084
 Right now / þat yet myn herte is soore afright
 Now god quod he / my sweuene recche aright
 And kepe my body / out of foul prisoun
 Me mette / how that I romed vp and doun 4088
 With-Inne our yeerd / wheer as I saugh a beest
 Was lyk an hound / and wolde han maad areest
 Vpon my body / and han had me deed
 His colour / was bitwixe yelow and reed 4092
 And tipped was his tayl / and bothe hise eeris
 With blak / vnlyk the remenant of hise heeris
 His snowte smal / with glowynge eyen tweye
 Yet of his look. for feere almoost I deye 4096
 This caused me / my gronyng doutelees
 ¶ Avoy quod she / fy on yow hertelees
 Allas quod she / for by that god aboue
 Now han ye lost myn herte and al my loue 4100
 I kan nat loue a Coward / by my feith
 ffor certes / what so any womman seith
 We alle desiren / if it myghite bee [leaf 184]
 To han housbondes / hardy wise and free 4104
 And secree / and no Nygard / ne no fool
 Ne hym / þat is agast of enery tool
 Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue
 How dorste ye seyn for shame / vn-to youre loue 4108
 That any thyng myghite make yow afer
 Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a berd
 ¶ Allas and konne ye been agast of sweuenys
 No thyng god woot / but vanitee in sweuene is 4112

Sweuenes / engendren of repleccioñs
 And ofte of fume / and of compleccioñs
 Whan humours / been to habundant in a wight
 ¶ Certes this dreem / which ye han met to-nyght 4116
 Cometh / of greet superfluytee
 Of youre rede Colera pardee
 Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes
 Of Arwes / and of fyre with rede lemes 4120
 Of grete beestes / that they wol hem byte
 Of contekes and of whelpes / grete and lyte
 Right as the humour / of Malencolie
 Causeth ful many a man / in sleepe to crie 4124
 ffor feere of blake beres / or boles blake
 Or elles / blake deueles wole hem take
 ¶ Of othere humours / koude I telle also
 That werken many a man / in sleepe ful wo 4128
 But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan
LO Catoñ which þat was so wys a man
 Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes
 ¶ Now sire quod she / whan ye flee fro the beemes 4132
 ffor goddes loue / as taak som laxatyf
 Vp peril of my soule / and of my lyf
 I conseilte yow the beste / I. wol nat lye
 That bothe of Colere / and of Malencolye 4136
 Ye purge yow / and for ye shal nat tarie
 Though in this toun / is noon Apothecarie
 I shal my self. to herbes techen yow
 That shul been / for youre hele / and for youre prow 4140
 And in oure yeerd / tho herbes shal I fynde
 The whiche han / of hire propretee by kynde
 To purge yow / bynethe and eek aboue
 fforyet nat this / for goddes owene loue 4144
 Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioñ
 Ware the sonne / in his ascencioñ
 Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours hoote.
 And if it do / I dar wel leye a grote 4148

That ye shul haue / a ffeuere terciane
 Or an Agu / that may be youre bane
 A day or two / ye shul haue digestyues [leaf 184, back]
 Of wormes / er ye take youre laxatyues 4152
 Of lawriol / Centaure / and ffumetere
 Or elles of Ellebor / that groweth there
 Of katapuce / or of Gaitrys beryis
 Of herbe yue growyng in oure yeerd ther mery is 4156
 Pekke hem vp right as they growe and ete hem yn
 Be myrie housbonde / for youre fader kyn
 Dredeth no dreem / I kan sey yow namoore
Madame quod he / graunt mercy of youre loore 4160
 But natheles / as touchyng Daun Catoun
 That hath of wysdom / swich a greet renoun
 Though that he bad / no dremes for to drede
 By god / men may / in olde bookes rede 4164
 Of many a man / moore of Auctorite
 Than euere Caton was / so moot I thee
 That al the reuers seyn / of this sentence
 And han wel founden by experience 4168
 That dremes / been significaciōis
 As wel of Ioye / as of tribulaciōis
 That folk enduren / in this lif present
 Ther nedeth / make of this noon Argument 4172
 The verray preeue / sheweth it in dede
 ¶ Oon / of the gretteste Auctour / þat men rede ¶ Nota de Sompnio
 Seith thus / þat whilom two felawes wente
 On pilgrimage / in a ful good entente 4176
 And happed so / they coomen in a toun
 Wher as ther was / swich congregacioun
 Of peple / and eek so streit of herbergage
 That they ne founde / as muche as o cotage 4180
 In which they bothe / myghite logged bee
 Wherfore / they mosten of necessitee
 As for that nyght departen compaignye
 And ech of hem / gooth to his hostelrye 4184

And took^t his loggyng^t as it wolde falle
 That oon of hem / was logged in a stalle
 ffer in a yeerd^t / with Oxen of the plough
 That oother man / was logged wel ynough 4188
 As was his Auenture / or his ffortune
 That vs gouerneth alle / as in commune
 ¶ And so bifel / þat longe er it were day
 This man mette ^{.i. dremed} in his bed ther as he lay 4192
 How þat his felawe / gan vp-on hym calle
 And seyde Allas / for in an Oxes stalle
 This nyght I shal be mordred / ther I lye
 Now helpe me deere brother / or I dye 4196
 In alle haste / com to me he sayde
 ¶ This man out of his sleepe / for feere abrayde
 But whan that he was wakened / of his sleepe [leaf 185]
 He turned hym / and took of it no keepe 4200
 Hym thoughte / his dreem nas but a vanitee
 Thus twies / in his slepyng^t dremed hee
 And atte thridde tyme / yet his felawe
 Cam as hym thoughte / and seide .I am now slawe 4204
 Bihoold my bloody woundes depe and wyde
 Arys vp erly / in the morwe tyde
 And at the West gate / of the toun quod he
 A Carte / ful of donge / ther shaltow se 4208
 In Which / my body is hid / ful priuely
 Do thilke Carte / arresten boldely
 My gold caused my mordre / sooth to sayn
 And tolde hym euery point^t how he was slayn 4212
 With a ful pitous face / pale of hewe
 And truste wel / his dreem he foond ful trewe
 ffor on the morwe / as soone as it was day
 To his felawes In / he took the way 4216
 And whan þat he cam / to this Oxes stalle
 After his felawe / he bigan to calle
 ¶ The hostiler / answerde hym anon
 And seyde sire / your felawe is agon 4220

As soone as day / he wente out of the toun
 ¶ This man / gan fallen in suspecioun
 Remembrynge / on hise dremes / þat he mette
 And forth he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette 4224
 Vn-to the westgate of the toun / and fond
 A dong Carte / as it were to donge lond
 That was arrayed / in that same wise
 As ye han herd / the dede man deuyse 4228
 And with an hardy herte / he gan to crye
 Vengeance and Iustice / of this felonye
 My felawe / mordred is / this same nyght
 And in this Carte / heere he lith gapyng vpright 4232
 I crye out on the Ministres quod he
 That sholden kepe / and reulen this Citee
 Harrow allas / heere lith my felawe slayn
 What sholde I moore / vn-to this tale sayn 4236
 The peple out sterte / and caste the Cart to grounde
 And in the myddel of the dong they founde
 The dede man / that mordred was al newe
 O blisful god / that art so Iust and trewe ¶ Auctor
 Lo / howe þat thou biwreyst mordre alway 4241
 Mordre wol out / that se we day by day
 Mordre / is so wlatson / and abhomynable
 To god / that is so Iust and resonable 4244
 That he / ne wol nat / suffre it heled be
 Though it abyde / a yeer / or two / or thre
 Mordre wol out this my conclusioun [leaf 185, back]
 And right anon / Ministres of that toun 4248
 Han hent the Carter / and so soore hym pyned
 And eek the hostiler / so soore engyned
 That they biknewe / hire wikkednesse anon
 And were an-hanged / by the nekke bon 4252
 ¶ Heere may men seen / þat dremes been to drede
 And certes / in the same book / I rede
 Right in the nexte Chapitre after this
 I gabbe nat. so haue I ioye or blis 4256

Two men / that wolde han passed ouer see ¶ *Adhuc de sompno*
 ffor certeyn cause / in to a fer contree
 If that the wynd / ne hadde been contrarie
 That made hem / in a Citee for to tarie 4260
 That stood ful myrie / vpon an hauen syde
 But on a day / agayn the euen tyde
 The wynd gan chaunge / and blew right as hem leste
 Iolif and glad / they wente vn-to hir reste 4264
 And casten hem / ful erly for to saille
 ¶ But herkneth / to that o man / fil a greet meruaille
 That oon of hem / in slepyng as he lay
 Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day 4268
 Him thoughte / a man stood by his beddes syde
 And hym comanded / þat he sholde abyde
 And seyde hym thus / if thou tomorwe wende
 Thow shalt be dreynt my tale is at an ende 4272
 ¶ He wook / and tolde his felawe what he mette
 And preyde hym / his viage to lette
 As for that day / he preyde hym to byde
 ¶ His felawe / that lay / by his beddes syde 4276
 Gan for to laughē / and scorned him ful faste
 No dreem quod he / may so myn herte agaste
 That I wol lette / for to do my thynges
 I sette nat a straw / by thy dremynges 4280
 ffor sweuenes / been but vanytees and Iapes
 Men dreme al day / of Owles / or of Apes
 And of many a maze / ther-with-al
 Men dreme of thyngs þat neuere was ne shal 4284
 But sith I see / that thou wolt heere abyde
 And thus forlewthen / wilfully thy tyde
 God woot it reweth me / and haue good day
 And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way 4288
 But er þat he hadde / half his cours yseyled
 Noot I nat why / ne what myschaunce it cyled
 But casuelly / the shippes botme rente
 And shipe and man / vnder the water wente 4292

ELLESMERE 514 (6-T. 291)

Mette he nat' that he sat vp-on a tree
 Which signified / he sholde anhangd bee
 ¶ Lo heere Adromacha / Ectores wyf
 That day / that Ector / sholde lese his lyf 4332
 She dremed / on the same nyght biforn
 How pat the lyf of Ector / sholde be lorne
 If thilke day / he wente in-to bataille
 She warned hym / but' it myghte nat auaille 4336
 He wente / for to fighte natheles
 But he was slayn anon of Achilles
 But thilke tale is al to longe for to telle
 And eek' it is ny day / I may nat dwelle 4340
 Shortly I seye / as for conclusiō
 That I shal han / of this Avisiō
 Aduersitee / and I seye forthermoor [leaf 186, back]
 That I ne telle / of laxatyues no stoor 4344
 ffor they been venymes / I woot it weel
 I hem diffye / I loue hem neuer a deel
 ¶ Now let vs speke of myrthe / and stynte al this
 Madame Pertelote / so haue I blis 4348
 Of o thyng' god hath sent me large grace
 ffor whan I se / the beautee of youre face
 Ye been so scarlet' reed / aboute youre eyen
 It maketh / al my drede for to dyen 4352
 ffor al so siker / as In principio
 Mulier est' hominis confusio
 ¶ Madame / the sentence / of this latyn is
 Womman is mannes Ioye / and al his blis 4356
 ffor whan I feele a nyght' your' softe syde
 Al be it' that I may nat' on yow ryde
 ffor pat oure perche / is maad so narwe allas
 I am so ful of ioye / and of solas 4360
 That I diffye / bothe sweuene and dreem
 And with that word / he fly down fro the becm
 ffor it was day / and eke hise hennes alle
 And with a chuk / he gan hem for to calle 4364

ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yerd
 Real he was / he was namoore aferd
 And fethered Pertelote / twenty tyme
 And trad as ofte / er it was pryme 4368
 He looketh / as it were / a grym leoun
 And on hise toos / he rometh vp and doun
 Hym deigned nat to sette his foot to grounde
 He chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounde 4372
 And to hym rennen thanne / hise wyues alle
 Thus roial / as a prince is in an halle
 Leue I this Chauntecleer / in his pasture
 And after / wol I telle / his auenture 4376

Whan pat the Monthe / in which the world bigan
 That highite March / whan god first maked man
 Was compleet and passed were also
 Syn March bigan / thritty dayes and two 4380
 Bifel / that Chauntecleer / in al his pryde
 Hise seuene wyues / walkynge by his syde
 Caste vp hise eyen / to the brighte sonne
 That in the signe of Taurus / hadde yronne 4384

Twenty degrees and oon / and som-what moore
 And knew by kynde / and by noon oother loore
 That it was Pryme / and crew with blisful steuene
 The sonne he seyde / is clomben vp on heuene 4388
 ffourty degrees and oon / and moore ywis
 Madame Pertelote / my worldes blis
 Herkneth thise blisful briddes / how they synge [leaf 187]
 And se / the fresshe floures / how they sprynge 4392
 fful is myn herte / of reuel and solas
 But sodeynly / hym fil a sorweful cas
 ffor euere / the latter ende of ioye is wo
 God woot pat worldly ioye / is soone ago 4396
 And if a Rethor / koude faire endite
 He in a Cronycle sauflly myghite it write
 As for a souereyn notabilitee ¶ Petrus Comestor
 Now euery wys man / lat him herkne me 4400

This storie / is al so trewe I vndertake
 As is the book / of launcelot de lake
 That wommen holde / in ful greet reuerence
 Now wol I / come / agayn to my sentence 4404
A Colfox / ful of sly Iniquitee
 That in the groue / hadde wonned yeres three
 By heigh ymaginacioñ / forn-cast
 The same nyght / thurgh-out the hegges brast 4408
 In-to the yerd / ther Chauntecleer the faire
 Was wont and eek hise wyues to repaire
 And in a bed of wortes / stille he lay
 Til it was passed / vndren of the day 4412
 Waitynge his tyme / on Chauntecleer to falle
 As gladly / doon thise homycides alle
 That in await liggen / to mordre men
 O false mordroure / lurkyng in thy den 4416
 O newe Scariot newe Genylon
 false dissynulour / o greek synon
 That broghtest Troye / al outrely to sorwe
 O Chauntecleer / acursed be that morwe 4420
 That thou in-to that yerd / flaugh fro the bemes
 Thou were / ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
 That thilke day / was perilous to thee
 But what þat god forwoot moot nedes bee 4424
 After the opinioñ / of certein clerkis
 Witnesse on hym / that any parfit clerk is
 That in scole / is greet altercacioñ
 In this mateere / and greet disputisoun 4428
 And hath been / of an hundred thousand men
 But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren
 As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn
 Or Boece / or the Bisshope Bradwardyn 4432
 Wheither / that goddes / worthy forwityng
 Streyneth me / nedefully to doon a thyng
 Nodely / clepe I / symple necessitee
 Or elles / if free choys be graunted me 4436

To do that same thyng^t. or do it noght^t
 Though god forwoot^t it^t er þat it was wroght^t
 Or if his wityng^t. streyneth neuer a deel [leaf 187, back]
 But by necessitee condicioneel 4440
 I wil nat han to do / of swich mateere
 My tale is of a Cok^t. as ye may heere
 That took his conseil / of his wyf with sorwe
 To walken in the yerð / vpon that morwe 4444
 That he hadde met that dreem / þat I of tolde
 Wommennes conseils / been ful ofte colde
 Wommannes conseil / brogh^te vs first to wo
 And made Adam / out of Paradys to go 4448
 Ther as he was ful myrie / and wel at ese
 But for I noot^t to whom it mygh^t displese
 If I / conseil of wommen wolde blame
 Passe ouer / for I seye it in my game 4452
 Rede Auctours / where they trete / of swich mateere
 And what they seyn of wommen / ye may heere
 Thise been the Cokkes wordes / and nat myne
 I kan noon harm / of no womman diuyne 4456
Faire in the soond^t / to bathe hire myrily
 Lith Pertelote / and alle hire sustres by
 Agayn the sonne / and Chauntecleer so free
 Soong^t murier / than the Mermayde in the see 4460
 ffor Phisiologus / seith sikerly
 How þat they syngen / wel and myrily
 ¶ And so bifel / that as he cast his eye
 Among^t the wortes / on a Boterflye 4464
 He was war of this fox / þat lay ful lowe
 No-thing^t ne liste hym thanne for to crowe
 But cride anon cok / cok / and vp he sterte
 As man / that was affrayed in his herte 4468
 ffor naturelly / a beest desireth flee
 ffro his contrarie /. if he may it see
 Though he neuer erst^t. hadde seyn it with his eye
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / whan he gan hym espye 4472

He wolde han fled / but that the fox anon
 Seyde gentil sire / allas wher wol ye gon
 Be ye affrayed of me / that am youre freend
 Now certes / I were worse than a feend 4476
 If I to yow / wolde harm / or vileynye
 I am nat come / your conseil for tespye
 But trewely / the cause of my comynge
 Was oonly / for to herkne how that ye synge 4480
 ffor trewely / ye haue as myrie a steuene
 As any Aungel / that is in heuene
 Ther-with ye han in Musyk' moore feelynge
 Than hadde Boece / or any þat kan synge 4484
 My lord youre fader / god his soule blesse
 And eek youre mooder / of hire gentillesse
 Han in myn hous ybeen / to my greet ese [leaf 186]
 And certes sire / ful fayn wolde I yow plese 4488
 ¶ But for men speke of syngyng' I wol yow seye
 So moote I brouke wel / myne eyen tweye
 Saue yow / herde I neuere man yet synge
 As dide youre fader / in the morwenynge 4492
 Certes / it was of herte / al that he song'
 And for to make / his voys / the moore strong'
 He wolde so peyne hym / that with bothe hise eyen
 He moste wynke / so loude he wolde cryen 4496
 And stonden on his tiptoon / ther-with-al
 And strecche forth his nekke / long' and smal
 And eek he was / of swich discrecion
 That ther nas / no man in no Region 4500
 That hym / in song' or wisdom myghte passe
 I haue wel rad / in daun Burnel the Asse
 Among' hise vers / how that ther was a Cok'
 ffor that a preestes sone / yaf hym a knok' 4504
 Vp-on his leg' whil he was yong and nyce
 He made hym / for to lese his benefice
 But certeyn / ther nys no comparisoñ
 Bitwixe / the wisdom / and discrecion 4508

Of youre fader / and of his subtiltee
 Now syngeth sire / for seinte charitee
 Lat se / konne ye youre fader countrefete
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / hise wynges gan to bete 4512
 As man / þat koude his trayson nat espie
 So was he rauysshed with his flaterie
 A llas ye lordes / many a fals flatour
 Is in youre Courtes / and many a losengeour 4516
 That plesen yow / wel moore by my feith
 Than he / that soothfastnesse / vn-to yow seith
 Redeth Ecclesiaste / of flaterye
 Beth war ye lordes / of hir trecherye 4520
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / stood hye vp on his toos
 Strecchyng his nekke / and heald hise eyen cloos
 And gan to crowe / loude for the nones
 And daun Russeff the fox / stirte vp atones 4524
 And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer
 And on his bak / toward the wode hym beer
 ffor yet ne was ther no man / þat hym sewed
 ¶ O destinee / that mayst nat been eschewed 4528
 Allas / þat Chauntecleer / fleigh fro the bemes
 Allas / his wyf / ne roghte nat of dremes
 And on a friday / fil al this meschaunce
 ¶ O Venus / that art goddesse of plesaunce 4532
 Syn that thy seruant. was this Chauntecleer [leaf 188, back]
 And in thy seruyce / dide al his poweer
 Moore for delit than world to multiplie
 Why woltestow suffre hym / on thy day to dye 4536
 ¶ O Gaufred deere Maister souerayn
 That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
 With shot. compleynedest his deeth so soere
 Why ne hadde I now / thy sentence / and thy loore 4540
 The friday for to chide / as diden ye
 ffor on a friday / soothly slayn was he
 Thanne wolde I shewe yow / how þat I koude pleyne
 ffor Chauntecleres drede / and for his peyne 4544

¶ Certes / swich cry / ne lamentacion
 Was neuere / of ladyes maad / whan Ylion
 Was wonne / and Pirrus with his streite swerð
 Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam / by the berd 4548
 And slayn hym / as seith vs Eneydos
 As maden / alle the hennes in the clos
 Whan they had seyn / of Chauntecleer the sighte
 But soðeonly / dame Pertelote shrighthe 4552
 fful louder / than dide Hasdrubales wyf
 Whan þat hir housbonde / hadde lost his lyf
 And þat the Romayns / hadde brend Cartage
 She was / so ful of torment and of rage 4556
 That wilfully / in-to the fyr she sterte
 And brende hir seluen / with a stedefast herte
 ¶ O woful hennes / right so criden ye
 As whan that Nero / brende the Citee 4560
 Of Rome / cryden senatours wyues
 ffor þat hir husbondes losten alle hir lyues
 With-outen gilt this Nero hath hem slayn
 Now turne I wole / to my tale agayn 4564
This sely wydwe / and eek hir doghtres two
 Herden thise hennes crie / and maken wo
 And out at dores / stirten they anon
 And syen the fox / toward the groue gon 4568
 And bar vp-on his bak / the Cok away
 And cryden out harrow / and weylaway
 Ha . ha / the fox / and after hym they ran
 And eek with staues / many another man 4572
 Ran Colle oure dogge / and Talbot and Gerland
 And Malkyn / with a dystaf / in hir hand
 Ran Cow and Calf and the verray hogges
 So fered / for berkyng of the dogges 4576
 And shoutyng of the men and wommen eek
 They ronne so / hem thoughte hir herte break
 They yolliden / as feendes doon in helle
 The dokes cryden / as men wolde hem quelle 4580

The gees for feere / flownen ouer the trees (leaf 130r)
 Out of the hyve / cam the swarm of bees
 So hydous was the noyse / a benedicitee
 Certes / he lakke Straw / and his meynee 4584
 Ne made neuere / shoutes / half so shille
 Whan þat they wolden / any flemyng kille
 As thilke day / was maad vp-on the fox
 Of bras / they broghten bemes and of box 4588
 Of horn / of boon / in whiche they blewe and powped
 And ther-with-al / they skriked / and they howped
 It semed / as that heuene sholde falle
 Now goode men / I pray yow herkneth alle 4592
L o / how fortune / turneth sodeynly
 The hope / and pryde / of hir enemy
 This Cok / that lay vpon the foxes bak'
 In al his drede / vn-to the fox he spak' 4596
 And seyde sire / if that I were as ye
 Yet wolde I seyn / as wys god helpe me
 Turneth agayn / ye proude charles alle
 A verray pestilence / vp-on yow falle 4600
 Now am I come / vn-to the wodes syde
 Maugree youre heed / the Cox shal heere abyde
 I wol hym ete in feith / and that anon
 ¶ The fox answerde / in feith it shal be don 4604
 And as he spak that word / al sodeynly
 This Cok / brak from his mouth delyuerly
 And heighe vp-on a tree / he fleigh anon
 And whan the fox saugh / þat he was gon 4608
 ¶ Allas quod he / o Chauntecleer / allas
 I haue to yow quod he ydoon trespass
 In as muche / as I maked yow aferd
 Whan I yow hente / and broght in to this yerd 4612
 But sire I dide it. of no wikke entente
 Com down / and I shal telle yow what I mente
 I shal seye sooth to yow / god help me so
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / I shrewe vs bothe two 4616

And first I shrewe my self / bothe blood *and* bones
 If thou bigyle me / any ofter than ones
 Thou shalt na moore / thurgh thy flaterye
 Do me to synge / and wynke with myn eye 4620
 ffor he that wynketh / whan he sholde see
 Al wilfully / god lat him neuere thee
 ¶ Nay quod the fox / but god yeue hym meschaunce
 That is so / vndiscreet of gouernaunce 4624
 That Iangleth / whan he sholde holde his pees
 ¶ Lo swich it is / for to be recchelees
 And negligēt and truste on flaterye
 ¶ But ye / that holden / this tale a folye 4628
 As of a fox / or of a Cok and Hen [leaf 189, back]
 Taketh the moralite / goode men
 ffor seint Paul seith / þat al that writen is
 To oure doctrine / it is ywrite ywis 4632
 Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille
 Now goode god / if that it be thy wille
 As seith my lord / so make vs alle goode men ¶ *scilicet domi-*
 And brynge vs / to his heighe blisse Amen *nus Archiepis-*
copus Cantuari-
ensis

¶ Heere is ended / the Nonnes preestes tale 

UP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

ELLESMERE MS.

[THE PROEM.]

The prologe of the Seconde Nonnes tale  *[on lf 189, 54r]*

(1)

He Ministre and the Norice / vn-to vices 1
I Which that men clepe in English ydelnesse
That Porter of the gate is / of delices
To eschue / and by hire contrarie / hire oppresse 4
That is to seyn / by leueful bisynesse
Wel oghten we / to doon al oure entente
Lest that the feend / thurgh ydelnesse vs shente 7

(2)

ffor he / that with hise / thousand cordes slye 8
Continuelly / vs waiteth to biclappe
Whan he may man / in ydelnesse espye
He kan so lightly / cacche hym in his trappe 11
Til ~~pat~~ a man / be hent right by the lappe
He nys nat war / the feend hath hym in honde
Wel oghte vs werche / and ydelnesse withstonde 14

(3)

And though men dradden / neuere for to dye 15
Yet seen men wel / by reson doutelees
That ydelnesse / is roten slogardye
Of which ther neuere comth / no good nencrees 18
And seen / ~~pat~~ slouthe / it holdeth in a lees
Oonly to slepe / and for to ete and drynke
And to deuouren / al that othere swynke 21

(4)

And for to putte vs / fro swich ydelnesse 22
 That cause is / of so greet confusioñ
 I haue heer doon / my feithful bisynesse
 After the legende / in translacioñ 25
 Right of thy glorious lif and passioñ
 Thou *with* thy gerland/ wroght *with* rose *and* lilie
 Thee meene I / mayde and mooder Cecilie 28

(5)

A Nd thow / that flour of virgines art alle ¶ Inuocacio ad Ma-
riam. [100f 190]
 Of whom that Bernard/ list so wel to write
 To thee / at my bigynnyng first I call
 Thou confort of vs wrecches / do me endite 32
 Thy maydens deeth / that wan thurgh hire *merite*
 The *eterneel* lyf / and of the feend victorie
 As man may after / reden in hire storie 35

(6)

Thow mayde and mooder / doghter of thy sone 36
 Thow welles of mercy / synful soules cure
 In whom / that god for bountee / chees to wone
 Thow humble and heigh / ouer euery creature 39
 Thow nobledest so ferforth / oure nature
 That no desdeyn / the makere hadde of kynde
 His sone / in blood and flessch / to clothe and wynde 42

(7)

With-Inne the Cloistre blisful of thy sydis 43
 Took mannes shape / the *eterneel* loue and pees
 That of the tryne compas / lord and gyde is
 Whom erthe and see / and heuene out of relees 46
 Ay heryen / and thou virgine wemmelees
 Baar of thy body / and dweltest mayden pure
 The creatour / of euery creature 49

(8)

Assembled is in thee / magnificence	50
With mercy / goodnesse / and with swich pitee	
That thou / that art the sonne of excellence	
Nat oonly / helpest hem that preyen thee	53
But often tyme / of thy benygnytee	
ful frely / er that men / thyn help biseche	
Thou goost biforn / and art hir lyues leche	56

(9)

Now help thow meeke / and blisful faire mayde	57
Me flemed wrecche / in this desert of galle	
Thynk' on the womman Cananee / that sayde	
That whelpes eten / somme of the crommes alle	60
That from hir lordes table / been yfalle	
And though that I / vnworthy sone of Eue	
Be synful / yet accepte my bileue	63

(10)

And for that feith is deed / with-uten werkis	64
So for to werken / yif me wit and space	
That I be quit fro thennes / pat moost derk is	
O thou / that art so fair / and ful of grace	67
Be myn Aduocat in that heighe place	
Theras with-uten ende / is songe Osanne	
Thow Cristes mooder / doghter deere of Anne	70

(11)

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte	[leaf 150, back]
That troubled is / by the contagion	
Of my body / and also by the wighte	
Of erthely lust and fals affeccion	74
O hauene of refut o saluacion	
Of hem / pat been in sorwe / and in distresse	
Now helpe / for to my werk I wol me dresse	77

(12)

Yet preye I yow / þat reden that I write	78
fforyeue me / that I do no diligence	
This ilke storie / subtilly to endite	
ffor boþe haue I / the wordes and sentence	81
Of hym / that at the seintes reuerence	
The storie wroot and folwen hire legende	
I pray yow / that ye wole my werk amende	84

(13) [*THE TALE.*]

F irst wolde I / the name of seinte Cecile	¶ Interpretacio nominis Cecile / quam ponit frater Iacobus lanuensis in legenda
Expowne / as men may in hir storie see	
It is to seye in englissh / heuenes lilie	
ffor pure chaastnesse of virginitee	88
Or / for she whitenesse hadde of honestee	
And grene of Conscience / and of good fame	
The soote favour lilie / was hir name	91

(14)

Or Cecilie is to seye / the way to blynde	92
ffor she ensample was / by good techynge	
Or elles Cecile / as I writen fynde	
Is ioyned / by a manere conioynynge	95
Of heuene and lia / and heere in figuryngo	
The heuene is set for thought of hoolynesse	
And lia / for hire lastynge bisynesse	98

(15)

Cecile / may eek be seyd / in this manere	99
Wantynge of blyndnesse / for hir grete light	
Of sapience / and for hire thewes cleere	
Or elles loo / this maydens name bright	102
Of heuene and leos comth / for which by right	
Men myghte hire wel / the heuene of peple calle	
Ensamble / of goode / and wise werkes alle	105

EXT

FP G. § 1. SECOND NUN'S TALE. Ellesmere MS.

(16)

leos / peple in englissh is to seye	106
right as men may / in the heuene see	
sonne and moone / and sterres euery weye	
so men goostly / in this mayden free	109
of feith / the magnanymytee	
eek the cleernesse hool / of sapience	
sondry werkes / brighte / of excellence	112

(17)

I right / so / as thise Philosophres write	[leaf 191]
that heuene is swift and round / and eek brennynge	
hit so / was faire Cecilie the white	
swift and bisy / euere in good werkyng	116
and round and hool / in good perseueryng	
and brennyng euere / in charite ful brighte	
now haue I yow declared what she highite	119

¶ Explicit/

¶ Here bigynneth the Seconde Nonnes tale / of the
lyf of Sainte Cecile

(18)

This mayden bright Cecilie / as hir lif seith
Was comen of Romayne / and of noble kynde
And from hir Cradel / vp fostred in the feith
Of Crist and bar his gospel in hir mynde

She neuere cessed / as I writen fynde	
Of hir preyere / and god to loue and drede	
Bisekyng hym / to kepe hir maydenhede	126

[Continuing of the Second Nun]

(19)

And whan this mayden / sholde vn-to a man	127
Ywedded be / that was ful yong of age	
Which that ycleped was Valerian	
And day was comen / of hir marriage	130
She ful devout and humble in hire corage	
Vnder hir robe of gold / that sat ful faire	
Hadde next hire flessch / yclad hire in an haire	133

(20)

And whil the Orgues / maden melodie	134
To god allone / in herte thus sang she	
O lord / my soule / and eek my body gye	
Vnwemmed / lest that it confounded be	137
And for his loue / that dyde / vp-on a tree	
Euery seconde / and thridde day she faste	
Ay biddynge / in hire orisons ful faste	140

(21)

The nyght cam / and to bedde moste she gon	141
With hire housbonde / as ofte is the manere	
And pryuely / to hym she seyde anon	
O sweete / and wel biloued spouse deere	144
Ther is a conseil / and ye wolde it heere	
Which that right fayn / I wolde vn-to yow seye	
So that ye swere / ye shul me nat biwreye	147

(22)

¶ Valerian / gan faste vn-to hire swere	[leaf 191, back]
That for no cas / ne thyng/ that myghte be	
He sholde neuere mo / biwreyen here	
And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she	151
I haue an Aungel / which that loueth me	
That with greet loue / wher so I wake or sleepe	
Is redy ay / my body for to kepe	154

(23)

And if he / may feelen out of drede	155
That ye me touche // or loue in vileynye	
He right anon / wol sle yow with the dede	
And in youre yowthe / thus ye sholden dye	158
And if that ye / in clene loue me gye	
He wol yow louen as me / for youre clenness	
And shewen yow / his ioye and his brightnesse	161

(24)

¶ Valerian / corrected / as god wolde 162
 Answerde agayn / if I shal trusten thee
 Lat me that Aungel se / and hym biholde
 And if that it a verray Angel bee 165
 Thanne wol I doon / as thou hast prayed me
 And if thou loue / another man / for sothe
 Right with this swerd / thanne wol I sle yow bothe 168

(25)

Cecile answerde anon / right in this wise 169
 If that yow list. the Angel shul ye see
 So þat ye trowe in Crist / and yow baptize
 Gooth forth / to Via Apia / quod shee 172
 That fro this toun / ne stant but Miles three
 And to the poure folkes / þat ther dwelle
 Sey hem right thus / as that I shal yow telle 175

(26)

Telle hem / that I Cecile / yow to hem sente 176
 To shewen yow / the goode Vrban the olde
 ffor secree thynges / and for good entente
 And whan that ye / Seint Vrban han biholde 179
 Telle hym the wordes / whiche þat I to yow tolde
 And whan þat he / hath purged yow fro synne
 Thanne shul ye se / that Angel er ye twynne 182

(27)

¶ Valerian / is to the place ygon 183
 And right as hym was taught / by his lernynge
 He foond this hooly / olde Vrban anon
 Among the Seintes buryeles lotynge ^{l. lacrimans} 186
 And he anon / with-uten tariynge
 Dide his message / and whan þat he it tolde
 Vrban for ioie / his handes gan vp holde 189

(28)

The teeris / from his eyen leet he falle	(leaf 192)
Almyghty lord / o Ihesu Crist quod he	
Sower of chast conseil / hierde of vs alle	
The fruyt of thilke seed of Chastitee	193
That thou hast sowe in Cecile / taak to thee	
Lo / lyk a bisy bee / with-outen gile	
Thee serueth ay / thyn owene thral Cecile	196

(29)

ffor thilke spouse / that she took right . now	197
fful lyk a fiers leoun / she sendeth heere	
As meke / as euere / was any lamb to yow	
And with that word / anon ther gan appere	200
An oold man / clad in white clothes cleere	
That hadde a book with lettre of gold in honde	
And gan / bfore Valerian to stonde.	203

(30)

Valerian as deed / fil down for drede	204
Whan he hym saugh / and he vp hente hym tho	
And on his book / right thus he gan to rede	
O. lord. o. feith. o. god with-outen mo	207
O. Cristendom / and fader of alle also	
Abouen alle / ouer alle / euerywhere	
Thise wordes / al with gold ywriten were	210

(31)

Whan this was rad / thanne seyde this olde man	211
Leeuestow this thyng or no ? / sey ye or nay	
I leue al this thyng / quod Valerian	
ffor oother thyng than this / I dar wel say	214
Vnder the heuene / no wight thynke may	
The vanysshed this olde man / he nyste where	
And Pope Vrban / hym cristned right there	217

(32)

¶ Valerian gooth hoom / and fynt Cecilie	218
With-Inne his chambre / with an Angel stonde	
This Angel / hadde / of Roses and ¹ of lilie ¹	[¹ later]
Corones two / the which he bar in honde	221
And first to Cecile / as I vnderstonde	
He yaf that oon / and after gan he take	
That oother / to Valerian hir make	224

(33)

With body clene / and with vnwemmed thoght	225
Kepeth ay wel / thise corones three	
fro Paradys to yow / haue I hem broght	
Ne neuere mo / ne shal they roten bee	228
Ne lese hir soote sauour / trusteth me	
Ne neuere wight shal seen hem with his eye	
But he be chaast and hate vileynye	231

(34)

And thow Valerian / for thow so soone	[leaf 198, back]
Assentedest to good conseil also	
Sey what thee list and thou shalt han thy boone	
I haue a brother / quod Valerian tho	235
That in this world / I loue no man so	
I pray yow / that my brother may han grace	
To knowe the trouthe / as I do in this place	238

(35)

¶ The Angel seyde / god liketh thy requeste	239
And bothe / with the palm of martirdom	
Ye shullen come / vn-to his blisful feste	
And with that word / Tiburce his brother coom	242
And whan that he / the sauour vndernoon	
Which that the Roses / and the lilies caste	
With-Inne his herte / he gan to wondre faste	245

(36)

And seyde / I wondre / this tyme of the yeer 246
 Whennes / that soote sauour cometh so
 Of Rose and lilies / that I smelle heer
 ffor though I hadde hem / in myne handes two 249
 The sauour / myghte in me no depper go
 The sweete smel / þat in myn herte I fynde
 Hath chaunged me / al in another kynde 252

(37)

¶ Valerian seyde / two corones / han we 253
 Snow white and Rose reed / that shynen cleere
 Whiche þat thyne eyen / han no myght to see
 And as thou smellest hem / thurgh my preyere 256
 So shaltow seen hem / leue brother deere
 If it so be / thou wolt with-outen slouthe
 Bileue aright and knowen verray trouthe 259

(38)

¶ Tiburce answerde / seistow this to me 260
 In soothnesse / or in dreem I herkne this
 In dremes quod valerian / han we be
 Vn-to this tyme / brother myn ywis 263
 But now at erst in trouthe our dwellyng is
 How woostow this quod Tiburce / in what wyse ?
 Quod Valerian / that shal I thee deuyse 266

(39)

¶ The Aungel of god / hath me trouthe ytaught 267
 Which thou shalt seen / if that thou wolt reneye
 The ydoles and be clene / and elles naught
 And of the myracle / of thise corones tweye 270
 Seint Ambrose / in his preface list to seye
 Solempnely / this noble doctour deere
 Commendeth hym / and seith in this manere

(40)

¶ The palm of martirdom / for to receyue [Deaf 194]
 Sainte Cecile / fulfild of goddes yifte
 The world / and eek hire chambre / gan she weyue
 Witnesse / Tyburces / and Cecilies shrifte 277
 To whiche / god of his bountee wolde shifte
 Corones two / of floures wel smellynge
 And made his Angel / hem the corones brynge 280

(41)

The mayde hath broght men / to blisse aboue 281
 The world hath wist / what it is worth certeyn
 Deuocion of Chastitee to loue
 Tho shewed hym Cecile / al open and pleyne 284
 That alle ydoles / nys but a thyng in veyn
 ffor they been dombe / and therto they been deue
 And charged hym / hise ydoles for to leue 287

(42)

Who so / that troweth nat this / a beest he is 288
 Quod tho Tiburce / if þat I shal nat lye
 And she gan kisse his brest. that herde this
 And was ful glad / he koude trouthe espye 291
 This day / I take thee / for myn Allye
 Seyde this blisful / faire mayde deere
 And after that. she seyde as ye may heere 294

(43)

¶ Lo / right so / as the loue of Crist quod she 295
 Made me thy brotheres wyf/. right in that wise
 Anon for myn Allye / heer take I thee
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ydoles despise 298
 Go with thy brother now / and thee baptise
 And make thee clene / so þat thou mowe biholde
 The Angeles face / of which thy brother tolde 301

(44)

¶ Tiburce answerde / and seyde brother dere 302
 first tel me / whider þat I shal / and to what man ?
 To whom quod he ^s com forth / with right good cheere
 I wol thee lede / vn-to the Pope Vrban 305
 Til Vrban ^s brother myn Valerian
 Quod tho Tiburce /. woltow me thider lede
 Me thynketh / that it were a wonder dede 308

(45)

Ne menestow nat Vrban / quod he tho 309
 That is so ofte / dampned to be deed
 And woneth in halkes / alwey to and fro
 And dar nat ones / putte forth his heed 312
 Men sholde hym brennen / in a fyr so reed
 If he were founde / or þat men myghte hym spye
 And we also / to bere hym compaignye 315

(46)

And whil we seken / thilke diuinitee [leaf 198, back]
 That is yhid / in heuene pryuely
 Algate / ybrend in this world shul we be
 To whom Cecile / answerde boldely 319
 Men myghten dreden / wel and skilfully
 This lyf to lese / myn owene deere brother
 If this were lyuyng eonly and noon oother 322

(47)

But ther is better lif in oother place 323
 That neuere shal be lost ne drede thee noght
 Which goddes sone / vs tolde thurgh his grace
 That fadres sone / hath alle thyng ywroght 326
 And al that wroght is / with a skilful thoght
 The goost. that fro the fader gan procede
 Hath sowled hem / with-uten any drede 329

(48)

By word and by myracle / goddes sone	339
Whan he was in this world declared heere	
That ther was oother lyf / ther men may wone	
To whom answerde Tiburce / o suster deere	333
Ne seydestow right now / in this manere	
Ther nys but o god / lord in soothfastnesse	
And now of three / how maystow bere witnessse	336

(49)

¶ That shal I telle quod she / er I go	337
Right as a man / hath sapiences three	
Memorie / Engyn / and Intellect also	
So / in beyng / of diuinitee	340
Thre persones / may ther right wel bee	
The gan she hym / ful bisily to preche	
Of Cristes come / and of hise peynes teche	343

(50)

And many pointes / of his passioñ	344
How goddes sone / in this world was withholde	
To doon mankynde / pleyñ remissioñ	
That was ybounde in synne and cares colde	347
Al this thyng. she vn-to Tiburce tolde	
And after this / Tiburce in good entente	
With Valerian / to Pope Vrban he wente	350

(51)

^{qui. sanctus Vrbanus} That thanked god / and with glad herte and light	351
He cristned hym / and made hym in that place	
Parfit in his lernynge / goddes knyght	
And after this / Tiburce / gat swich grace	354
That every day / he saugh in tyme and space	
The Aungel of god / and euery maner boone	
That he god axed // it was sped ful soone	357

(52)

¶ It were ful hard / by ordre for to seyn [leaf 194]
 How manye wondres / Ihesus for hem wroghte
 But atte laste / to tellen short and pleyn
 The sergeantz / of the toun of Rome hem soghte 361
 And hem / biforn Almache the Prefect broghte
 Which hem opposed / and knew al hire entente
 And to the ymage / of Iuppiter hem sente 364

(53)

And seyde / who so wol nat sacrifice 365
 Swape of his heed / this my sentence heer
 Anon thise martirs þat I yow deuyse
 Oon Maximus / that was an Officer 368
 Of the Prefectes / and his Corniculer
 Hem hente / and whan he forth the Seintes ladde
 Hym self he weepe / for pitee that he hadde 371

(54)

Whan Maximus / had herd the Seintes loore 372
 He gat hym / of the tormentours leue
 And ladde hem to his hous / with-oute moore
 And with hir prechyng' er that it were eue 375
 They gonnen / fro the tormentours to reue
 And fro Maxime / and fro his folk echone
 The false feith / to trowe in god allone 378

(55)

¶ Cecile cam / whan it was woxen nyght' 379
 With preestes / that hem cristned alle yfeere
 And afterward' / whan day was woxen light'
 Cecile hem seyde / with a ful stedefast cheere 382
 Now Cristes owene knyghtes / leue and deere
 Cast alle away / the werkes of derknesse
 And Armeth yow / in Armure of brightnesse 385

(56)

Ye han for sothe / ydoon a greet bataille	386
Yours cours is doon / yours feith han ye conserued	
Gooth to the corone of lif that may nat faille	
The rightful Iuge / which þat ye han serued	389
Shal yeue it yow / as ye han it deserued	
And whan this thyng was seyde / as I deuysel	
Men ledde hem forth / to doon the sacrifise	392

(57)

But whan they weren / to the place broght	393
To tellen shortly / the conclusioun	
They nolde encense / ne sacrifise right noght	
But on hir knees / they setten hem adoun	396
With humble herte / and sad deuocioun	
And losten / bothe hir heuedes in the place	
Hir soules wenten / to the kyng of grace	399

(58)

This Maximus / that saugh this thyng bityde	[leaf 194, back]
With pitous teeris / tolde it anon right	
That he hir soules / saugh to heuene glyde	
With Angels / ful of cleernesse and of light	403
And with this word / conuerted many a wight	
for which Almachius / dide hym so bete	
With whippe of leed / til he the lif gan lete	406

(59)

¶ Cecile hym took / and buryed hym anon	407
By Tiburce / and Valerian softly	
With-Inne hire buryng place vnder the stoon	
And after this / Almachius hastily	410
Bad hise Ministres / fecchen openly	
Cecile / so that she myghte in his presence	
Doon sacrifice / and Iuppiter encense	413

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

[*Spurious Link.*]

But here of I wil passe as now [leaf 56, back, foot]
 And of 3ong Gamelyne I wil telle 3ow 2

[*Tale.*]

THe tale of 3ong Gamelyn [leaf 57]
 ithen *and* listenyth *and* herkenyth a right 1
 And 3e shul here of a doughti knyght
 Sire Iohn of Bondys was his name
 He coude of norture and of mochel game 4
 Thre sones the knyght had *and* with his body hem wan
 The eldest was a moche schrew *and* sone he bi-gan
 His bretheren loued wel here fader *and* of him were a-gast
 The eldest disserued his fader curs *and* h had hit at last 8
 The gode knyght his fader lyued so 3ore
 That deth was comyn him to *and* handlid him ful sore
 The good knyght cared sore sike þer he lay
 How his children shuld lyuen after his day 12
 He had ben wide where but non husbonde he was
 Al the londe that he hadde hit was purchas
 ffayn he wold it were dressed among hem alle
 That eche of hem hadd his part as it myght falle 16
 Tho sente he in to contre after wyse knyghtes
 To helpen delen his londes *and* dresen hem to rightes
 He sent hem word by *lettres* þai shuld hye blyue
 3if thei wold speke with him while he was on lyue 20

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Tho þe knyghtes herden syke þat he lay
 Had þei no rest nother nyght no day
 Til þei come to him þer he lay stille
 On his deep bed to a-bide goddes wille 24
 Then seide þe good knyght sike þer he lay
 Lordes I ʒow warne for soth with-oute nay
 I may no lenger lyuen here in this stonde
 ffor thorough goddes wille deth drawes me to grounde 28
 Ther nas none of hem alle þat herd hem a right
 That thei hadden reuthe of þat ilke knyght
 And seiden sire for goddes loue ne dismay ʒow nought
 God may done bote of bale þat is now I-wroght 32
 Than spake þe gode knyght sike þer he lay
 Bot of bale god may send I wot it is no nay
 But I byseke ʒow knyghtes for the loue of me
 Goth and dresseth my londes among my sones thre 36
 And for the loue of god de-lith not hem amys
 And forȝetþ not Gamelyn my ʒong sone þat is
 Takip hide to that one as wel as to that other
 Seeld ʒe seen any heier helpen his brother 40
 Tho leten þei the knyght lyen þat was not in hale [leaf 87, back]
 And wenten in to conseil his londis for to dele
 ffor to delem hem alle to oon that was her þoght
 And for Gamelyn was ʒongest he shuld haue noght 44
 Alle the lond þat ther was þei dalten it in two
 And leten Gamelyn þe ʒong with-uten lond go
 And eche of hem seide to oþer ful lowde
 His breprin might ʒeue him lond when he good cowde 48
 When thei hadde deled the lond at her wille
 Thei comen to þe knyght þer he lay stille
 And told him a-noon how thei had wroght
 And the knyght ther he lay likid it right noght 52
 Than saide the knyght by seynt martyn
 ffor al þat ʒe haue don ʒet is þe lond myn
 ffor goddes loue Neighboures stondith alle stil
 And I wil dalen my lond right after my wil 56

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Iohn my eldest sone shal haue plowes fyue
 That was my fadres heritage while he was on lyue
 And my myddlest sone fyue plowes of lond
 That I halpe for to gete wit my right hond 60
 And alle myn oþer purchas of londes *and* ledes
 þat I be-quethe Gamelyn *and* alle my gode stedes
 And I be-seke 3ow good men þat law con of lond
 ffor Gamelyns loue þat my quest stond 64
 Thus dalt þe knyght his lond by his day
 Right on his deeth bed sike þer he lay
 And sone afterward he lei stoon stille
 And died whan tyme come as it was cristes wille 68
 A-none as he was dede *and* vnder gras grave
 Sone þe elder brother giled the 3ong knave
 He toke in to his honde his lond *and* his lede
 And Gamelyn him selue to clothen *and* to fede 72
 He clothed him *and* fedde hym yuel *and* eke wrothe
 And lete his londes for-fare *and* his houses bothe
 His parkes *and* his wodes *and* dide no thing welle
 And sithen he it a-bowght on his owne felle 76
 So long was Gamelyn in his brothres halle
 ffor þe strengest of good wille þei douteden him alle
 Ther was none ther-in noþer 3ong ne old
 That wold wrath Gamelyn were he neuer so bold 80
 Gamelyn stood on a day in his brotheris 3erd
 And bi-gan with his hand to hondel his berd
 He þought on his landes þat lay vnsawe [leaf 88]
 And his faire okes þat doune were I-drawe 84
 His parkes were broken and his dere reved
 Of alle his good stedes noon was him by-leued
 His howses were vnhiled and ful yuel dight
 Thoo þou3t Gamelyn it went not a-right 88
 Afterward came his brother walking there
 And seide to gamelyn is oure mete 3are
 Tho wrathed him Gamelyn *and* swore by goddes booke
 Thow shalt go bake thi self I wil not be thi cooke 92

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Now broþer Gamelyn how answerist þow now
 Thou spakest neuer suche a word as þow dost now
 By my feith seide Gamelyn now me thinkith nede
 Of alle þe harmes þat I haue I toke neuer ȝet hede 96
 My parkes ben broken and my dere by-reved
 Of myn armes *and* my stedes noght is me byleued
 Al þat my fader me bi-quap al goth to shame
 And þer-fore haue þou goddes curs brother by thyn name 100
 Than spake his brother þat rape was of rees
 Stand stille gadling and hold þi pees
 þou shalt be fayn to haue þi mete *and* þi wede
 What spekest þou gadling of lond or of lede 104
 þan seide Gamelyn þe child þat ȝyng
 Cristes curs mote he haue þat clepith me gadling
 I am no worse gadlyng ne no worse wight
 But borne of a lady *and* geten of a knyght 108
 Ne dorst he note to Gamelin neuer a fote go
 But clepid to him his men *and* seide to hem tho
 Goth *and* betith this boy *and* reueth him his witte
 And lete him lerne an other to answeere me bette 112
 Then saide þe child ȝong Gamelyn
 Cristes curs mote þou haue brother art þou myn
 And ȝif I shal algate be beten a-noon
 Cristes curs mote þou haue but þou be that oon 116
 And anon his brother in þat grete hete
 Made his men to fette staffes Gamelyn to bete
 When euery of hem hadd a staff I-nomen
 Gamelyn was war þoo he seigh hem comen 120
 Tho Gamelyn sighe hem comen he loked ouer aft
 And was warre of a pestel stood vnder þe walle
 Gamelyn was light and þider con he lepe
 And droff alle his brothers men right sone on hepe [if ss, bk]
 And lokid as a wild lyon. *and* laide on gode wone
 Tho his brother sei þat he by-gan to gone
 He fley vp in to a loft *and* shete þe dore faste
 This Gamelyn with his pestel mad hem al a-gast 128

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

Some for gamelyns loue and some for eye
 Alle thei drowhen hem to halues þoo he gan to pleye
 What now seide Gamelyn euel mote 3e thee
 Wil 3e bi-gynne contik and so sone flee 132
 Gamelyn soght his broþer whider he was flow
 And sauhe where he lokid oute at a wyndowe
 Brother said Gamelyn come a litel nere
 And I wil teche the a play at the bokelere 136
 His brother hym answerid and seid by saint Richere
 While þat pestel is in thi hond I wil come no nere
 Brother I wil make thi pees I swere by cristes ore
 Cast a-way þe pestel and wrathe the nomore 140
 I moste nede saide Gamelyn wrath me at ones
 ffor þou wold make þi men to breke my bones
 Ne hadde I hadde mayn and might in myn armes
 To haue hem fro me thei wold haue do me harmes 144
 Gamelyn saide his brother be þou not wrothe
 ffor to seen the haue harme me were right lothe
 I ne did it noght broþer but for a fondyng
 ffor to loken or þou art strong and art so 3yng 148
 Come a-doune then to me *and* graunt me my bone
 Of a thing I wil the axe *and* we shul saught sone
 Down þan come his broþer that fykel was *and* felle
 And was swith sore a-ferd of þe pesteff 152
 He saide brother Gamelyn axe me þi bone
 And loke þou me blame but I it graunt sone
 Than saide Gamelyn brother I was
 And we shul be at one þou most graunt me this 156
 Alle þat my fadir me by-quap while þat he was on lyue
 Thou most do me it haue 3if we shul not stryve
 þat shat þou haue Gamelyn I swere by cristes ore
 All þat þi fader þe bi-quath þough þou woldest haue more
 Thi lond that lith leie wel it shal be sowe
 And thyn houses reised vp þat ben leide ful lowe
 Thus saide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouth
 And pought on falsenes as he wel couthe 164

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

The knyght þought on treson and Gamelyn on none [leaf 59]
 And went and kissed his brother *and* when þei were at one
 Alas 3ong Gamelyn no thing he ne wiste
 With suche false treson his brother him kyste 168
 Lynthenyth and lysteneth *and* holdith 3oure tong
 And 3e shul here talkyng of Gamelyn the 3ong
 Ther was ther be siden cried a wrastelynge
 And ther fore ther was sett a Ram and a Rynge 172
 And Gamelyn was in wille to wende þerto
 ffor to preuen his might what he coude do
 Brother seide Gamelyn be seint Richere
 Thou most lene me to nyght a litel cursere 176
 That is fressh to þe spores on for to ride
 I most on an Erand a litel here be side
 Be god saide his brother of stedes in my stalle
 Go and chese the þe best spare non of hem alle 180
 Of stedes and of cursers that stoden hem be side
 And telle me good brother whider þou wilt ride
 Here be side brother is cried a wrastlynge
 And þer fore shal be sette a ram and a rynge 184
 Moche worship it were brother to vs alle
 Might I þe ram *and* þe rynge bryngen home to þis halle
 A stede þer was sadeled smertly and skete
 Gamelyn dide a paire of spores faste on his fete 188
 He sette his fote in þe stirop the stede he by-strod
 And toward þe wrastlynge the yong child rood
 Tho Gamelyn þe yonge was riden oute at gate
 The fals knyght his brother lokod yit after þate 192
 And bi-sought ihesu crist that is heuen kyng
 He mighte breke his nekke in that wrastlinge
 As sone as Gamelyn come ther the place was
 He light doun of his stede and stode on the gras 196
 And ther he herde a frankelen weylaway synge
 And bi-gan bitterly his handes for to wrynge
 Gode man seide Gamelyn whi makest þou þis fare
 Is ther no man that may 3ow helpen out of care 200

Allas seide þis frankleyn that euer was I bore
 ffor twei stalworth sones I wene that I haue lore
 A Champion is in þe place þat hath wrought me sorowe
 ffor he hath slayn my two sones but ȝif god hem borwe
 I wol ȝeue ten pound by ihesu crist and more 205
 With þe nones þat I fond a man to handle hym sore [1130, bk]
 Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt þou wel done
 Hold myn hors while my man drawith of my shone 208
 And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede
 And I wil in to þe place gone to loke ȝif I may spede
 By god seide þe frankleyn it shal be done
 I wil my self be thi man to draw of thi shone 212
 And wende þou in to place ihesu criste the spede
 And drede not of thi clothes ne of þi gode stede
 Barfoot and vngirt Gamely In came
 Alle þat were in þe place hede of him þei name 216
 How he durste aunte him to done his myght
 þat was so doughti a champion in wrastling *and* in fight
 Vp sterte þe Champion rapely a-none
 Toward ȝong Gamelyn he by-gan to gone 220
 And seide who is þi fader *and* who is þi sire
 ffor sothe þou art a grete fool þat þou come here
 Gamelyn answerid þe Champion tho
 Thou knew wel my fader while he couthe go 224
 Whiles he was on lyue by seint Martyn
 Sire Iehan of Boundis was his name *and* I gamelyn
 ffelaw seide þe Champion so mote I thyue
 I knew wel þi fader whiles he was on lyue 228
 And thi self gamelyn I wil þat þou it here
 While þou were a ȝong boy a moche schrew þou were
 Than seide Gamelyn *and* swore by cristes ore
 Now I am older wax þou shalt fynde me a more 232
 By god seide þe Champion wel come mote þou be
 Come þou ones in my hond þou shalt neuer the
 It was wel with-Inne the nyght *and* the mone shone
 When Gamelyn and the Champion to-gedre gon gone 236

The Champion cast tornes to gamelyn þat was prest
 And gamelyn stode and bade him done his best
 Than seide Gamelyn to þe Champion
 Thou art fast aboute to bryng me a-doun 240
 Now I haue proued mony tornes of thyne
 Thou most he seide proue on or two of myne
 Gamelyn to þe Champion ȝede smertely a-none
 Of alle the tornes þat he couthe he shewid him but one
 And kest him on the lift side þat þe ribbes he brake 245
 And þerto his one arme þat ȝaf a grete crak'
 Than seide gamelyn smertly a-none [leaf 60]
 Shal it be hold for a cast or elles for none 248
 By god seide þe Champion wheþer it be
 He þat cometh ones in thi honde shal he neuer the
 þan seide þe frankeleyn þat hadd his sones there
 Blessed be þou Gamelyn þat euer þou bore were 252
 The frankeleyn seide to þe Champion on hym stood hym no
 This is ȝong Gamelyn þat taght þe this pleie [eye
 A-ȝen vnswared þ* Champion þat liked no þing wel
 He is althther maister *and* his pleie is right felle 256
 Sithen I wrastelet first it is gone ȝore
 But I was neuer in my lif handeled so sore
 Gamelyn stode in þe place anon with-out serke
 And seid ȝif þer ben mo lete hem come to werke 260
 The Champion þat payned hym to wirke sore
 Hit semyth bi his continance þat he wil no more
 Gamelyn in þe place stood stille as stoon
 ffor to a-byde wrastlinge but þer come none 264
 Ther was noon with gamelyn þat wold wrastle more
 ffor he handlid þe Champion so wonderly sore
 Two gentil men ȝemed þe place
 Come to Gamelyn god ȝyue him gode grace 268
 And seide to him do on thi hosen *and* þi shone
 ffor sothe at þis tyme þis faire is done
 And þan seide Gamelyn so mote I wel fare
 I haue not ȝet haluendel sold my ware 272

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Tho seide the Champion so brok I my swere
 He is a fool þat ther-of bieth þou sellest it so dere
 Thoo seide the ffrankeleyn þat was in moche care
 fflaw he seid whi lakkest þou þis ware 276
 By seynt Iame in Galys þat mony man hath soght
 3it is it to good chepe that þou hast bought
 Tho þat wardeyns were of þat wrastlinge
 Come and brought Gamelyn þe Ramme *and* þe rynge 280
 [.

 *no gap in the MS.*]
 And went with moche ioye home in þe mornynge 284
 His brother seie wher he came with þe grete route
 And bade shit þe gate *and* hold hym with-oute
 The porter of his lord was sore a-gaste
 And sterte anon to þe gate *and* lokkid it faste 288
 Now litheþ *and* listenythe boþe 3ong *and* old
 And 3e shul here gamyn of Gamelyn þe bold
 Gamelyn come ther-to for to haue comyn In [leaf 66, back]
 Than was it shet fast with a pyn 292
 Than seide Gamelyn Porter vndo þe 3ate
 ffor gode mannys sore stonde þer ate
 Than answerid þe porter and sware by goddes berd
 Thou ne shalt Gamelyn come in to þis 3erde 296
 Thou lixt seid Gamelyn so broke I my chyne
 He smote the wiket with his foote *and* brake away the pyne
 The porter sey tho it might ne better be
 He sette foote on erthe and by-gan to flee 300
 By my fai seide gamelyn þat trauaile is lore
 ffor I am on foote as light as þou haddest it swore
 Gamelyn ouer toke þe porter *and* his tene wrake
 And girt him in the nekke þat þe boon to-brake 304
 And toke him by þat on arme *and* threw him in a welle
 Vij^c. fadame it was depe as I haue herd telle
 Whan Gamelyn þe 3ong þus had plaied his plaie
 Alle þat in þe 3erde were drowen hem a-waye 308

þei dreden him ful sore for werke þat he wroghte
 And for þe faire companye þat he þider broghte
 Gamelyn þede to þe þate *and* lete it vp wide
 He lete In alle þat gon wold or ride 312
 And seide 3e be welcome with-out any greue
 ffor we wil be maisters here *and* axe no man leue
 3esterday I left seide 3ong Gamelyn
 In my brother seler fyue tonn wyne 316
 I wil not þis companye parten on twyne
 And 3e wil don after me while soþe is þer-Ine
 And 3if my brother grucche or make foule chere
 Other for spence of mete *and* drynk^t þat we spend here
 I am oure Catour *and* bere oure Alther purse 321
 He shal haue for his grucching seint marie curse
 My broþer is a nygon I swere by cristes ore
 And we wil spende largely þat he hath spared 3ore 324
 And who þat make grucching þat we here dwelle
 He shal to þe porter in to þe draw welle
 Vij. dayes *and* vij nyght Gamelyn held his fest
 With moche solace was there *and* none chest 328
 In a litel torret his brother ley steke
 And sey hem wast his gode *and* dorst not speke
 Erly in a morn yng on the viij. day
 The gestes come to Gamelyn *and* wold gon her' way 332
 Lordes seide Gamelyn wil 3e so hye [leaf 61]
 All þe wyn is not 3et dronke so browke I myn eie
 Gamelyn in his hert was ful woo
 When his gestes toke her leue fro him forto go 336
 He wold þe had dwelled lenger *and* þei saide nay
 But by-taught gamelyn god *and* goode day
 Thus made Gamelyn his fest *and* broght it wel to end
 And after his gestes toke leue to wende 340
 Litheþ *and* listenyþ *and* holdith 3oure tong
 And 3e shul here Gamen of Gamelyn þe 3ong
 Herkenyþ lordinges *and* listeneþ a right
 When alle gestes were gon how Gamelyn was dight 344

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Alle the while þat Gamelyn held his mangerie
 His brother þought on him be wreke with his trecherie
 Tho Gamelyns gestes were riden and goone
 Gamelyn stode anone allone frend hadde he none 348
 Tho after felle sone with-In a litul stonde
 Gamelyn was taken *and* ful hard I-bonde
 fforth come the false knyght out of þe solere
 To gamelyn his brother he ȝede ful nere 352
 And saide to gamelyn who made the so bolde
 ffor to stroien my store of my housholde
 Brother seide Gamelyn wrath the right noght
 ffor it is mony day gone sith it was boght 356
 ffor brother þou hast hade by seint Richere
 Of xv. plowes of lond þis sixtene ȝere
 And of alle þe bestes þou hast forþ bredde
 þat my fader me by-quap on his deþ bedde 360
 Of alle þis sixtene ȝere I ȝeue the þe prowē
 ffor the mete and the drinke þat we haue spendēd now
 Than saide þe false knyght euyl mote he the
 Herken brother Gamelyn what I wil ȝeue the 364
 ffor of my body brother heire geten haue I none
 I wil make þe myn eyer I swere by seint Iohan
 Parfay seide gamelyn and it so be
 And þou pinkest as þu seist god ȝeld it the 368
 No thing wist Gamelyn of his brother gile
 Ther fore he him by-giled in a litul while
 Gamelyn seid he oo þing I the telle
 Tho þou threw my porter in the draw welle 372
 I swore in þat wrath and in þat grete moote
 That þou shuldest be bonde both hond and foote (leaf 61, back)
 [.
 376
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 For to holden myn a-vow as I the by-hoote
 Brother seide Gamelyn as mote I the
 þou shalt not be for-swore for þe loue of me 380

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Tho maden thei Gamelyn to sitte myght not stonde
 Til þei hadd him bondþ boþe foote and honde
 The fals knyght his brother of Gamelyn was a-gast
 And sent after feteres to feteren him fast 384
 His brother made lesinges on him þere he stode
 And told hem þat comen In þat Gamelyn was wood
 Gamelyn stood to a post bonden in þe halle
 Tho þat comen In lokod on him alle 388
 Euere stode gamelyn euen vp right
 But mete ne drinke had he none noþer day ne nyght
 Than saide gamelyn brother by myn hals
 Now I haue aspied þou art a parti fals 392
 Hadde I wiste þe treson þat þou hast I-fond
 I wolde haue ȝene strokes or I had be bond
 Gamelyn stode bond stille as any stone
 Two daies and two nyghtes mete hadde he none 396
 Than saide gamelyn þat stod I.-bond strong
 Adam spenser me þinkeþ I fast to long
 Adam spencer now I beseche the
 ffor the moche loue my fader loued the 400
 Ȝif þou may come to the keys lose me out of bond
 And I wil parte with the of my fre londþ
 þen saide adam þat was þe spencer
 I haue serued thi brother þis xvj. ȝere 404
 Ȝif I lete the gon out of his beure
 He wold say after-ward I were a traitour
 Adam seide Gamelyn so browke I myn hals
 Thou shal fynd my brother atte þe last fals 408
 Ther-fore brother Adam lose me out of bondes
 And I. wil parte with þe of my fre landes
 Vp suche forward seid Adam I-wis
 I wil do þerto alle þat in me is 412
 Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the
 I wil holde þe couenaunt and þou wil me
 A-none as Adame lord to bed was gone
 Adam toke þe keys and lete gamelyn out a-none 416

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

He vnlokked gamelyn both hondes and feete
 In hope of auancement þat he him by-hete (leaf 62)
 Than saide Gamelyn þanked be goddes sonde
 Now I am lose bothe fote and honde 420
 Hadde I now eten *and* dronken aright
 Ther is none in this hous shuld bynde me þis nyght
 Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as any stone
 And lad him into spence raply a-none 424
 And sette him to soper right in a priue stede
 He bade him do gladly and Adam so dede
 Anon as Gamelyn hadde eten wel and fyne
 And þerto I-dronken wel of þe red wyne 428
 Adam seid Gamelyn what is now þi rede
 Or I go to my brother and gird of his hede
 Gamelyn seide Adam it shal not be so
 I con teche þe a rede þat is worth þe two 432
 I wote wel for sothe þat is no nay
 We shul haue a mangerie right on sonday
 Abbotes and prioures mony here shal be
 And oper men of holy chirche as I telle [þe] 436
 þou shalt stond vp by the post as þou were hond fast
 And I schal leue hem vn-loke þat away þou may hem cast
 Whan þat þei haue eten *and* wasshen her hondes
 þow shalt beseke hem alle to bring þe out of bondes 440
 And ȝif þei wil borow the þat were gode game
 þan were þu out of prison and I oute of blame
 And yf eche of hem say to vs nay And if eche
 I shal do an other I swere bi þis day 444
 Thow shalt haue a gode staf *and* I wil haue anoper
 And cristes curs haue þat oon þat faileþ þat oper
 ȝe for god seide Gamelyn I sei it for me
 If I faile on my syde yuel mote I the 448
 ȝif we shul algate assoile hem of her synne
 Warne me brother Adam whan we schul by-gynn
 Gamelyn said Adam by seint charite
 I wil warne the by-forne whan it shal be 452

Whan I wynke on the loke for to gone
 And cast away þi ffetres *and* come to me anone
 Adam saide Gamelyn blessid be thi bones
 þat is a good conseil ȝeuen for þe nones 456
 ȝif þei werne me to bring out of bondes
 I wil sette good strokes right on her lendes
 Tho þe sonday was comen *and* folke to þe feste [leaf 62, back]
 ffaire þei were wel-comed both lest *and* meste 460
 And euere as þei at halle dore come Inne
 Thei cast here eyȝe on ȝong Gamelyne
 The fals knyght his broþer ful of trechery
 Alle þe gestes þat þere were at þe mangery 464
 Of Gamelyn his brother he told hem with mouthes
 Alle þe harme and þe shame þat he telle couthe
 Tho þei were I-serued of messes two or thre
 Than seide Gamelyn how serue ȝe me 468
 It is noght wel serued by god þat aȝt made
 þat I sitte fasting and oþer men make glade
 The fals knyght his brother þer as he stode
 Tolde alle gestes þat Gamelyn was woode 472
 And Gamelyn stode stille and answarid noght
 But Adams wordes he held in his thoght
 Tho Gamelyn gan speke deolfulli with alle
 To þe grete lordes þat saten in þe halle 476
 Lordes he seide for cristes passion
 Helpe to bring Gamelyn out of prison
 Than saide an Abbot sorow on his cheke
 He shal haue cristes curs *and* seint maries eke 480
 þat þe out of pryson beggeþ or borwe
 But euer worth him wel þat doth the moche sorwe
 After þat Abbot þan spake anoþer
 I wold þyn heed were of þoghe þou were my broþer 484
 Alle þat þe borwe foul mote hem falle
 Thus þei saide alle þat were in the halle
 Than saide a Priour euel mote he preue
 It is grete sorw *and* care boy þou art on lyue 488

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

Ow seid Gamelyn so browke I my bone
 Now I haue spied þat frendes haue I none
 Cursed mote he worth both flesshe *and* blood
 þat euer doþ priour or Abbot any good 492
 Adam þe spencer toke vp þe clothe
 And loked on Gamelyn and say þat he was wrothe
 Adam on the pantrie litul he þoght
 But two gode stanes to halle dore he broght 496
 Adam loked on Gamelyn and he was war anone
 And cast away the fetres *and* bi-gan to gone
 Tho he cam to Adam he toke þe on staf
 And by-gan to worche and good strokes ȝaft [leaf 63] 500
 Gamelyn come in to þe halle and the spencer bothe
 And lokid hem a-boute as þei hadde ben wrothe
 Gamelyn spreynþ holi water *with* an Oken spire
 That some that stod vp right fel in þe fire 504
 þer was no lewed man þat in þe halle stoode
 That wold do Gamelyn any thing but goode
 But stoden by siden *and* lete hem bothe wirche
 ffor þei hadde ne reweth of men of holy chirche 508
 Abbot or priour Monk or chanoun
 That Gamelyn ouertoke anone þei ȝeden down
 Ther was none of alle þat with his staf mette
 þat he made hem ouer throw *and* quite hem his dette 512
 Gamelyn said Adam for seint charite
 Pay gode lyueray for þe loue of me
 And I wil kepe þe dore so euer here I masse
 Er þai ben assoiled þer shal none passe 516
 Doute the noght seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere
 Kepe wel þe dore and I wil wirche here
 Bi-stere þe gode Adam and let þer non fle
 And we shul telle largeli how mony þat þer be 520
 Gamelyn saide Adam do hem but goode
 Thei ben men of holi chirche draw of hem no blood
 Saue wel þe crowne *and* do hem no harmes
 But breke bothe her legges *and* sithen her armes 524

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Thus Gamelyn and Adam wrought right fast
 And plaide with the monkes *and* made hem agast
 Thider þei come riding Ioly with swaynes
 And home a-ȝeyn þei were lad in cartes *and* waynes 528
 Tho þei hadden alle I-doo þen seide a gray frere
 Alas sire Abbot what did we now here
 Tho þat we comen hider it was a cold reede
 Vs hadde ben better at home with water *and* with brede 532
 While Gamelyn made ordres of monkes *and* frere
 Euer stode his brother *and* made foul chere
 Gamelyn vp with his staff þat he wel knew
 And girt him in þe nek' þat he ouer threw 536
 A litil a-boue þe gyrdel þe rigge bon to-brast
 And sette him in þe fetres þer he sat arst
 Sitte þer brother seide Gamelyn
 ffor to colen þi body as I did myn. 540
 As sucche as þei hadden wroken hem on her foon [leaf 63, back]
 Thei askid water and wasshen a-none
 What some for here loue *and* somme for her awe
 Alle þe seruauantes seruet hem of the beste lawe 544
 The sherreue was þenne but fyue myle
 And alle was told him in a litil while
 How gamelyn and Adam haden doñ a sory res
 Bounden and wounden men a-ȝens the kynges pees 548
 Tho by-gan sone strif for to wake
 And the sherrif aboute Gamelyn forto take
 Now litheþ and listenep so god ȝeue ȝow good fyne
 And ȝe shul here gode game of ȝong Gamelyn 552
 ffoure and twenti ȝong men þat helden hem ful bold
 Come to þe shirreue and seide þat þei wolde
 Gamelyn and Adam fette by here fay
 The shirreue ȝeue hem leue soth for to say 556
 Thei hyeden fast wold þei not lynne
 Til þei come to þe gate þer Gamelyn was Inne
 Thei knokkeden on þe gate þe porter was nyghe
 And loked out at an hole as man that was slighe 560

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

The porter hadde be-hold hem a litil while
 He loued wel Gamelyn *and* was drad of gile
 And let þe wyket stond ful stille
 And asked hem with oute what was here wille 564
 ffor alle þe grete companye þan spake but one
 Vndo þe gate porter *and* lete vs in gone
 Than saide þe porter so brouke I my chyn
 3e shul saye 3oure erant er 3e come Ine 568
 Say to Gamelyn and Adam 3if þeire wil be
 We wil speke with hem two wordes or thre
 ffelaw saide þe porter stande þer stille
 And I wend to Gamelyn to wyte his wille 572
 In went þe porter to gamelyn a-none
 And saide sire I warne 3ow here be comen 3oure foon
 The shirreues men ben atte þe gate
 ffor to take 3ow both shul 3e not scape 576
 Porter seid Gamelyn so mote I wel the
 I wil allowe þe þi wordes when I my tyme see
 Go a-geyn to þe gate *and* dwelle with hem a while
 And þou shalt se right sone porter a gile 580
 Adam seide Gamelyn loke þe to gone
 We haue foo men atte gate *and* frendes neuer one (leaf 64)
 Hit ben þe Shirreues men þat hider ben comen
 Thei be swore to-geder þat we shal be nome 584
 Gamelyn said Adam hye the right blyue
 And if I faile the þis day euel mote I thryue
 And we shul so wel-come þe Shirreues men
 That some of hem shal make her beddes in þe fen 588
 At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went
 And a good Cartstaf in his hond hent
 Adam hente sone an other grete staf
 ffor to helpen Gamelyn *and* good strokes 3af 592
 Adam fel tweyne *and* Gamelyn fel thre
 The other sette feete on erth *and* by-gan to flee
 What saide Adam so euer here I masse
 I haue right good wyn drynke or 3e passe 596

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Nay by god seide þei þi drinke is not goode
 It wold make mannes brayn to lien in his hoode
 Gamelyn stood stille and lokid him a-boute
 And saide þe shirreue cometh with a grete route 600
 Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now þi redes
 Here cometh þe sherreue *and* wil haue oure hedes
 Adam seide to Gamelyn myn rede is now þis
 A-bide we no lenger lest we fare anys 604
 I rede þat we to wood gone or þat we be fonde
 Better is þer louse þan in towne be bounde
 Adam toke bi the hond ʒong gamelyn
 And euery of hem drank a draght of wyn 608
 And after token her cours *and* wenten her way
 Tho fond þe sherreue nyst but none eye
 The sherreue light doune *and* wente in to halle
 And fond þe lord fetred fast with alle 612
 The shirreue vnfetered him right sone anone
 And sent after a leche to hele his rigge bone
 Late we now þe fals knyght lie in his care
 And take we of Gamelyn *and* loke how he fare 616
 Gamelyn in to þe wood stalkid stille
 And Adam spencer liked right ille
 Adam swore to Gamelyn by seint Richere
 Now I see it is mery to be a spencer 620
 That leuer me were keys to bere
 Than walken in þis wild woode my clothes to tere
 Adam seide Gamelyn dismay þe right noght [leaf 64, back]
 Mony good mannys child in care is broght 624
 As thei stod talkyng bothen in fflere
 Adam herd talking of men *and* nyghe him þought þei were
 Tho Gamelyn vnder wood lokid a-right
 Seuen score of ʒong men he se wel I-dight 628
 Alle sate at þe mete compas aboute
 Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute
 After bale cometh bote þorgh goddes might
 Me thinke of mete and drinke y haue a sight 632

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Adam loke tho vnder wode bough
 And tho he say mete and he was glad I-nough
 ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele
 And he was sore alonged after a gode mele 636
 As he saide þat word þe maister outlawe
 Sawgh Adam and Gamelyn vnder wode shawe
 3onge men saide þe maister bi þe gode rode
 I am war of gastes god send vs gode 640
 Yonde ben two yonge men wel I-dight
 And paraenture ther ben more who so loked aright
 Ariseth vp yong men *and* fette hem to me
 It is good þat we witten what men thei be 644
 Vp þer sterten seuene fro þe dyner
 And metten wiþ gamelyn *and* Adam spencer
 Whan thei were nighe hem þan seide þat one
 Yeldeth vp 3onge men 3oure bowes and 3oure flone 648
 Than saide Gamelyn that 3onge was of elde
 Moche sorowe mote þei haue þat to 3ow hem 3elde
 I course none other but right my selue
 Thei 3e fette to 3ow fyue þan be 3e twelue 652
 þo þei herde by his word that might was in his arme
 Ther was none of hem þat wolde don hem harme
 But seide to Gamelyn myldely and stille
 Come a-fore oure maistre and sai to him þi wille 656
 3onge men saide Gamelyn bi 3oure lewte
 What man is 3our maister that 3e with be
 Alle þe answerde with-oute lesinge
 Oure maister is crowned of outlawes kynge 660
 Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name
 He may neither mete ne drinke werne vs for shame
 3if þat he be hende and come of gentil blood
 He wil 3eue vs mete and drinke *and* do vs some good [1763]
 Be seint Iame saide Adam what harme þat I gete 665
 I wil aventure me þat I hadde mete
 Gamelyn and Adam went forth in fere
 And þei grette þe maister that þei fonde þere 668

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

Than saide þe maister kyng of owlaws
 What seke 3e 3onge men vnder wode shawes
 Gamelyn answerde þe kyng with his crowne
 He moste nedes walke in felde þat may not walke in towne
 Sire we walke not here none harne to do 673
 But 3if we mete a dere to shete þerto
 As men that ben hungry and mow no mete fynde
 And ben hard be-stad vnder wode lynde 676
 Of Gamelyn wordes þe maister hadde rewthe
 And seide 3e shal haue y-nowe haue god my treuthe
 He bad hem sitte down for to take reste
 And bad hem ete and drinke *and* þat of þe beste 680
 As þei eten *and* dronken wel and fyne
 Than saide on to an other this is gamelyn
 Tho was þe maister outlawe in to conseil nome
 And tolde how it was gamelyn that thider was come 684
 Anone as he herde how it was be-falle
 He made him maister vnder him ouer hem alle
 With-in þe thridde wike him come tydyng
 To þe maister outlawe that was here kyng 688
 That he shulde come home his pees was made
 And of þat gode tydyng he was ful gladde
 Tho saide he to his 3onge men soth forto telle
 Me ben comen tydinges I may no lenger dwelle 692
 Tho was Gamelyn anone with-oute tarienge
 Made maister outlawe and crowned her kyng
 Tho was Gamelyn crowned kyng of outlawes
 And walkid a while vnder wode shawes 696
 The fals knyght his broþer was shereue and sire
 And lete his brother endite for hate and for hire
 Tho were his bonde men sory *and* no thinge glad
 When Gamelyn her lorde wolves hede was cried *and* made
 And sent oute of his men where þei might him fynde 701
 For to go seke Gamelyn vnder wode lynde
 To telle him tydyng the wynde was went
 And alle his good reued *and* alle his men shent 704

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

Whan þei hadden him founden on knees þei hem setten *[cf 63, bk]*
 And a-doun with her hode and here lorde gretten
 Sire wraþe ȝowe noght for þe gode rode
 ffor we han brought ȝow tydynges but þei be not goode 708
 Now is þi brother sherreue *and* hap þe baillie
 And hath endited þe and wolfes hede doth þe crie
 Allas seide Gamelyn þat euer I was so slak
 That I ne hadde broke his nekke þo I his rigge brak 712
 Goth greteth wel myn housbondes and wife
 I wil be at the next shire haue god my lyfe
 Gamelyn came redy to þe next shire
 And ther was his brother both lorde *and* sire 716
 Gamelyn boldeliche came in to þe mote halle
 And putte adoun his hood amonge þe lordes alle
 God saue ȝow lordinges þat here be
 But broke bak sherreue euel mote thu the 720
 Whi hast thou do me þat shame *and* velonye
 ffor to lete endite me *and* wolfeshede do me crie
 Tho thought the fals knyght for to ben a-wreke
 And lete Gamelyn most he no thinge speke 724
 Might þer be no grace but Gamelyn at þe laste
 Was caste in prison and fetered faste
 Gamelyn hath a brother that hight sire Ote
 As gode a knyght and hende as might gon on foote 728
 Anone ȝede a messagere to that gode knyght
 And tolde him al to-gidre how Gamelyn was dight
 [. *no gap in the MS.*]
 He was right sory was he no þing light 732
 And lete sadle a stede and þe way he name
 And to his twei breþerne right sone he came
 Sire saide sir Ote to the sherreue tho
 We ben but thre bretheren shul we neuer be mo 736
 And þou hast prisoned þe beste of vs alle
 Suche a nother brother euel mote him be-falle
 Sire ote saide þe fals knyght lat be þi cours
 By god for thi wordes he shal fare the wors 740

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

To þe kynges prisone he is I-nome
 And ther he shal a-bide til þe Iustice come
 Parde saide sir Ote better it shal be
 I bid hym to mainprys þat þou graunte me 744
 Til þe next sitting of deliuraunce
 And late þan Gamelyn stond to his chaunce
 Brother in suche a forward I take him to the [leaf 65]
 And by þi fadres soule þat þe bygat *and* me 748
 But he be redy whan þe Iustice sitte
 Thou shalt bere þe Iugement for al þi grete witte
 I graunt wel saide sir Ote þat it so be
 Late delyuer hym anone *and* take him to me 752
 Tho was Gamelin delyuered to sir Ote his brother
 And þat nyght dwelled þe oon with þe tother
 On the morwen saide Gamelyn to sir Ote þe hynde
 Brother he saide I mote for soth fro ȝow wynde 756
 To loke how my ȝonge men leden her lif
 Whether þei lyuen in Ioy or elles in strif
 By god seide sir Ote þat is a cold rede
 Now I see þat alle þe Carke schal falle on my hede 760
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte *and* þou be not I-fonde
 I shal anone be take *and* in þi stede I-bonde
 Brother saide Gamelyn dismaie þe nyght
 ffor by seint Iame in Galys þat mony man hath sought 764
 ȝif þat god almyghti hold me my lif *and* my witte
 I wil be redy whan þe Iustice sitte
 Than saide sir Ote to Gamelyn god shild þe fro shame
 Come when þou seest tyme *and* bryng vs out of blame 768
 Litheþ and listeneþ and hold ȝow stille
 And ȝe schul here how Gamelyn hadde his wille
 Gamelyn went vnder wood Rys
 And fond ther playng ȝong men of prys 772
 Tho was ȝong Gamelyn right glad I-noghe
 When he fonde his men vnder woode boghe
 Gamelyn and his men talkeden in fere
 And þei had gode game her maister to here 776

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

His men told him of auentures þat þei had fonde
 And Gamelyn hem told hem a-zen how he was fast bonde
 While Gamelyn was outlaw hade he no cors
 þer was no man þat for him ferd þe wors 780
 But Abbotes and Priours monk' *and* Chanon
 On hem left he noght when he might hem nome
 While Gamelyn and his men made myrthes Ryve
 The fals knyght his brother euel mote he priue 784
 ffor he was fast aboute bothe day and other
 ffor to hire þe queste to hangen his brother
 Gamelyn stood on a day and be-beld
 The wodes and þe shawes *and* þe wild feld [*leaf 66, back*] 788
 He þoght on his brother how he him by-hette
 That he wolde be redy whan þe Iustice sette
 He þoght welle he wold with-oute delay
 Come a-fore þe Iustice to kepen his day 792
 And seide to his 3ong men dighteþ 3ow 3are
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte we most be þere
 ffor I am vnder borow til þat I come
 And my brother for me to pryson shal be nome 796
 Be seint Iame said his 3ong men *and* þou rede þerto
 Ordeigne how it shal be *and* it shal be do
 While Gamelyn was comyng þer þe Iustice satte
 The fals knyght his broþer for-3ate he not þate 800
 To hire þe men on his quest to hangen his brother
 Thoghe þei hadde not þe oon þei wolde haue þe tother
 Tho come Gamelyn fro vnder þe wode Rys
 And broght with him 3ong men of prys 804
 I see wel seide Gamelyn þe Iustice is sette
 Goo a-forn Adam and loke how it spette
 Adam went in to þe halle *and* loked aȝ a-boute
 He say þer stonde lordes grete and stoute 808
 And sir Ote his brother fetered ful faste
 Tho wente Adam oute of halle as he were a-gast
 Adam seide to Gamelyn *and* to his felawes alle
 Sire Ote stant fetered in þe mote halle 812

[.]

. no gap in the MS.]

- 3if god 3if vs grace wel for to doo
 He schal it a-bigge þat it broght þertoo 816
 Than saide Adam þat lokkes hade hore
 Cristes curs mote he haue þat him bond so sore
 And þou wilt Gamelyn do after my rede
 Ther is none in þe halle schal bere away his hede 820
 Adam seide Gamelyn we wil not do soo
 We wil sle þe giltif and late þe tother goo
 I wil in to þe halle and with þe Iustice speke
 On hem þat ben giltif I wil ben a-wreke 824
 Lete none scape at þe dore take 3ong men 3eme
 ffor I wil be Iustice þis day domes to deme
 God spede me þis day at my new werke
 Adam come with me for þou shalt be my clerk 828
 His men answerden him and bade him don his best
 And 3if þou to vs haue nede þou shalt fynde vs prest
 We wille stond with þe while þat we may dure [leaf 67]
 And bute we wirken manly pay vs none hure 832
 3ong men saide Gamelyn so mote I wel the
 As trusti a mayster 3e shal fynde me
 Right þere þe Iustice satte in þe halle
 In went Gamelyn amonges hem alle 836
 Gamelyn lete vnfetere his brother out of bond
 Then seide sir Ote his brother þat was hende
 Thou haddest Almost Gamelyn dwellet to long
 ffor þe quest is oute on me þat I shuld hong 840
 Brother seide Gamelyn so god 3eue me good rest
 þis day þe shul ben honged þat ben on þe quest
 And the Iustice bothe þat is þe Iuge man
 And the Shirreue bothe þorgh him it by-gan 844
 Than saide Gamelyn to þe Iustice
 Now is þi power done þou moste nedes rise
 Thou hast 3euen domes þat ben yuel dight
 I wille sitten in thi sete and dresen hem aright 848

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

The Iustice sate stille and rose not a-none
 And Gamelyn cleued his chike bone
 Gamelyn toke him in his armes *and* nomore spake
 But thrw him ouer þe barre *and* his arme brake 852
 Dorst none to Gamelyn say but goode
 ffor ferd of þe company þat with-oute stooode
 Gamely sette him down in þe Iustice sete
 And sir Ote his brother by him *and* Adam at his fete 856
 Whan Gamelyn was sette in þe Iustice sete
 Herken of a bourd þat Gamelyn dide
 He lete feter þe Iustice *and* his fals brother
 And lete hem come to þe barre þat on with þat other 860
 Tho Gamelyn hadde þus y-done hade no rest
 Til he hadde enquired who was on þe quest
 ffor to demen his brother sir Ote for to hong
 Er he wiste whiche þei were him þoght ful long 864
 But as sone as Gamelyn wiste where þai were
 He dide hem euerychon feter in fere
 And bringen hem to þe barre *and* setten hem in rew
 Bi my feith said þe Iustice þe shirreue is a shrew 868
 Than seide Gamelyn to þe Iustice
 Thow hast ȝeue domes of the worst assise
 And the xij. sisoures þat weren on þe quest
 Thei shul ben honged þis day so haue I gode rest [*leaf 67, back*]
 Than saide þe shirreue to ȝong Gamelyn 873
 Lord .I. cry the mercy brother art þou myn
 Ther-fore saide Gamelyn haue þou cristes curs
 ffor and þou were maister ȝit shuld I haue wors 876
 ffor to make short tale and noght to long
 He ordeyned hym a quest of his men so strong
 The Iustice *and* þe shirreue both honged hye
 To weyuen with þe ropes *and* þe wynd drye 880
 And the xij sisours sorow haue þat rewe
 Alle þei were hanged fast by þe nekke
 Thus endid þe fals knyght with his trecherie
 þat euer had lad his lif in falsenes and folie 884

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

He was honged by þe nekke *and* not by þe purs
 þat was þe mede þat he hadde for his faders curse
 Sire Otes was eldest *and* Gamelyn was 3ong
 Wenten to her frendes *and* passeden to þe kyng 888
 Thei maden pees with the kyng of þe best sise
 The kyng loued wel sir Ote *and* made him Iustice
 And after þe kyng made Gamelyn in Est *and* in Weste
 Chief Iustice of his fre foreste 892
 Alle his wight 3ong men þe kyng for-3af her gilt
 And sithen in gode Office þe kyng hath alle them pilt
 Thus wanne Gamelyn his lond and his lede
 And wreke him on his enemys *and* quite hem her mede 896
 And sire Ote his brother made him his heier
 And sithen wedden Gamelyn a wif gode *and* faier
 Thei lyueden to-gedre while þat crist wolde
 And sithen was Gamelyn grauen vnder molde 900
 And so shal we alle may þer no man fle
 God bring vs to þe Ioye þat euer shal be

Chaucer Society.

THE

Ellesmere MS

OF

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The Chaucer Society.

Editor in Chief.—F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Sq., Primrose Hill, N.W.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society is founded. There are many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts are wanted, and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder's proposal is to begin with *The Canterbury Tales*, and give of them (in parallel columns in Royal 4to) six of the best unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch also as the parallel arrangement will necessitate the alteration of the places of certain tales in some of the MSS, a print of each MS will be issued separately, and will follow the order of its original. The first six MSS to be printed are the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere); the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.); the Cambridge Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27; the Corpus, Oxford; the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield); and the Lansdowne 851 (British Museum).

Of Chaucer's Minor Poems,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the *Canterbury Tales*,—all, or nearly all, the MSS will be printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Mr F. J. Furnivall will read all with their MSS.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works; and the Second, such originals of, and essays on these as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the **First Series**, is,

- I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the *Canterbury Tales*, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 38 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Moveable Prologues" of the *Canterbury Tales*,—The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue,—when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

II.	The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere	MS.
III.	" " " " " " " "	Hengwrt " 154
IV.	" " " " " " " "	Cambridge " Gg. 4. 27
V.	" " " " " " " "	Corpus " Oxford
VI.	" " " " " " " "	Petworth " "
VII.	" " " " " " " "	Lansdowne " 851

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the **First Series**, is,

- VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales: Ellesmere MS.
- IX. " " " " " " " " Hengwrt " with an
- X. " " " " " " " " Cambridge " Appendix of
- XI. " " " " " " " " Corpus " "Gamelyn"
- XII. " " " " " " " " Petworth " from six MSS.
- XIII. " " " " " " " " Lansdowne "

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the **First Series**, is,

- XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious Tale of Gamelyn, in 6 parallel Texts. (Six-Text, Part II.)

The issue for 1871, in the **First Series**, is,

- XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS.
- XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS.
- XVII. " " " " " " " " Cambridge MS.
- XVIII. " " " " " " " " Corpus MS.
- XIX. The Shipman's, Prioress's, and Man of Law's Tales, from the Petworth MS.
- XX. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Lansdowne MS.

(each with woodcuts of fourteen drawings of Tellers of Tales in the Ellesmere MS.)

- XXI. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I:—'The Deth of Blaunche the Duchesse,' from Thynne's ed. of 1532, the Fairfax MS 16, and Tanner MS 346; 'the Complaynt to Pite,' 'the Parliament of Foules,' and 'the Complaynt of Mars,' each from six MSS.

- XXII. Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 'The Parliament of Foules,' from three MSS.

XXIII. Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1. two MS fragments of 'The Parliament of Fowles'; 2. the two differing versions of 'The Prologue to the Legend of Good Women,' arranged so as to show their differences; 3. an Appendix of Poems attributed to Chaucer, 1. 'The Balade of Pitee by Chauciers'; 2. 'The Cronycle made by Chaucer,' both from MSS written by Shirley, Chaucer's contemporary.

XXIV. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, being the best Text from the Parallel-Text Edition, Part I, containing, 1. The Deth of Blanche the Duchesse, 2. The Complaynt to Pite, 3. The Parliament of Fowles, 4. The Complaynt of Mars, 5. The A B C, with its original from De DeGuilleville's *Pelerinage de la Vie humaine* (edited from the best Paris MSS by M. Paul Meyer).

The issue for 1872, in the **First Series**, is,

XXV. Chaucer's Tale of Melibe, the Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, with the remaining 13 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS, and with Specimens of the Variations of 30 MSS in the Doctor-Pardoner Link. (6-Text, Pt IV.)

XXVI. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Ellesmere MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)

XXVII. The Wife's, Friar's, Summoner's, Monk's, and Nun's-Priest's Tales, from the Hengwrt MS, with 23 woodcuts of the Tellers of the Tales. (Part III.)

XXVIII. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Cambridge MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)

XXIX. A Treatise on the Astrolabe, addressed to his son Lowys, in 1391 A.D., by Geoffrey Chaucer, edited by the Rev. Walter W. Skeat, M.A.

The issue for 1873, in the **First Series**, is,

XXX. The Six-Text Canterbury Tales, Part V, containing the Clerk's and Merchant's Tales.

The issue for 1874, in the **First Series** (ready in June 1873), is,

XXXI. The Six-Text, Part VI, containing the Squire's and Franklin's Tales.

XXXII to XXXVI. Large Parts of the separate issues of five MSS.

The issue for 1875, in the **First Series** (ready in September 1873), is,

XXXVII. The Six-Text, Part VII, the Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, and Manciple's Tales, with the Blank-Parson Link.

XXXVIII to XLIII. Large Parts of the separate issues of the Six MSS, bringing all up to the Parson's Tale.

XLIV. A detailed Comparison of the *Troilus and Criseyde* with Boccaccio's *Filosofato*, with a Translation of all Passages used by Chaucer, and an Abstract of the Parts not used, by W. Michael Rossetti, Esq., and with a print of the *Troilus* from the Harleian MS 3943. Part I.

XLV, XLVI. Ryne-Index to the Ellesmere MS of the Canterbury Tales, by Henry Cromie, Esq., M.A. Both in Royal 4to for the *Six-Text*, and in 8vo for the separate Ellesmere MS.

For 1876, Part VIII of the Six-Text edition, containing the Parson's Tale, and completing the *Canterbury Tales*, is in the Press for the First Series; and for 1877, Part 2 of Chaucer's Minor Poems, completing them. Prof. Hiram Corson is making an Index to the Subjects and Names of *The Canterbury Tales*. He has also agreed to edit the Society's *Chaucer Concordance*.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1868 is,

1. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part I. This work includes an amalgamation of Prof. F. J. Child's two Papers on the use of the final -e by Chaucer (in T. Wright's ed. of *The Canterbury Tales*) and by Gower (in Dr Pauli's ed. of the *Confessio Amantis*).

2. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part I.: 1. Prof. Ebert's Review of Sandras's *Etude sur Chaucer*, translated by J. W. van Rees Hoets, M.A.; 2. A 13th-century Latin Treatise on the *Chitandre* (of the *Shipman's Tale*), edited by Mr E. Brock.

3. A Temporary Preface to the Society's Six-Text edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part I, attempting to show the right Order of the Tales, and the Days and Stages of the Pilgrimage, &c. &c., by F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1869 is,

4. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part II.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1870 is,

5. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part III.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1871 is,

6. Trial-Forewords to my Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Minor Poems* for the Chaucer Society (with a try to set Chaucer's Works in their right order of Time), by Fredk. J. Furnivall. Part I. (This Part brings-out, for the first time, Chaucer's long early but hopeless love.)

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1872 is,

7. Originals and Analogues of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part I. 1. The original of the *Man of Law's Tale* of Constance, from the French Chronicle of Nicholas Trevet, Arundel MS 56, ab. 1340 A.D., collated with the later copy, ab. 1400, in the National Library at Stockholm; copied and edited, with a translation, by Mr Edmund Brock. 2. The Tale of "Morelaus the Emperor," from the Early-English version of the *Gesta Romanorum* in Harl. MS 7333; and 3. Part of Matthew Paris's *Vita Offa Primi*, both stories illustrating incidents in the *Man of Law's Tale*. 4. Two French Fabliaux like the *Reeve's Tale*. 5. Two Latin Stories like the *Friar's Tale*.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1873 is,

8. Albertano of Brescia's *Liber Consilii et Consolationis*, A.D. 1246 (the Latin source of the French original of Chaucer's *Melibeus*), edited from the MSS, by Dr Thor Sundby.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1874 is,

9. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part II.: 3. John of Hoveden's *Practica Chilandri*, edited from the MS, with a translation, by Mr E. Brock. 4. Chaucer's use of the final -e, by Joseph Payne, Esq. 5. Mrs E. Barrett-Browning on Chaucer; being those parts of her review of the *Book of the Poets*, 1842, which relate to him; here reprinted by leave of Mr Robert Browning. Professor Bernhard Ten-Brink's critical edition of Chaucer's *Compleynge to Pitee*.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1875 is,

10. Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part II. 6. Alphonsus of Lincoln, a Story like the *Prioresse's Tale*. 7. How Reynard caught Chanticleer, the source of the *Nun's Priest's Tale*. 8. Two Italian Stories, and a Latin one, like the *Pardoner's Tale*. 9. The Tale of the Priest's Bladder, a story like the *Summoner's Tale*, being 'Li dis de le Vescie a Prestre,' par Jacques de Basiv. 10. Petrarca's Latin Tale of Griseldis (with Boccaccio's Story from which it was re-told), the original of the *Clerk's Tale*. 11. Five Versions of a Pear-tree Story like that in the *Merchant's Tale*. 12. Four Versions of The Life of Saint Cecilia, the original of the *Second Nun's Tale*.

11. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part IV.

12. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part I, The Robberies of Chaucer by Richard Brevelay and others at Westminster, and at Hatcham, Surrey, on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 1390, with some Account of the Robbers, from the Enrolments in the Public Record Office, by Walford D. Solby, Esq., of the Public Record Office.

13. Thynne's *Animadversions* (1599) on Speght's *Chaucers Works*, re-edited from the unique MS, by Fredk. J. Furnivall, with fresh Lives of William and Francis Thynne, and the only known fragment of *The Pilgrims Tale*.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1876 is,

14. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part II, The Household Ordinances of King Edward II, June 1323 (as englight by Francis Tate in March 1601 A.D.), with extracts from those of King Edward IV, to show the probable duties of CHAUCER as Valet or Yeoman of the Chamber, and Esquire, to Edward III, of whose Household Book no MS is known; together with Chaucer's Oath as Controller of the Customs; and an enlarged Autotype of Hoccleve's Portrait of Chaucer. J. Furnivall.

15. Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part II. 13. The Story of Constance, for the *Man of Law's Tale*. 14. A story told by a Jew for singing 'Gaude Maria,' an Analogue of the *Prioresse's Tale*. 15. The Paris Beggar-boy murdered by a Jew for singing 'Alma redemptoris mater!' an Analogue of the *Prioresse's Tale*; with a Poem by Lydgate.

16. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part III. 7. Chaucer's Prioress, her Nun Chaplain and 3 Priests, illustrated from the Paper-Survey of St Mary's Abbey, Winchester, by F. J. Furnivall. 8. Alliteration in Chaucer, by Dr Paul Lindner. 9. Chaucer a Wielifite; a critical Examination of the *Parsons Tale*, by Herr Hugo Simon. 10. The sources of the Wife of Bath's Prologue: Chaucer not a borrower from John of Salisbury, by the Rev. W. W. Woodcombe.

17. Supplementary Canterbury Tales: 1. The Tale of *Beryn*, with a Prologue of the merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury, re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's unique MS, by Fredk. J. Furnivall. Part I, the Text, with Wm. Smith's Map of Canterbury in 1588, now first engraved from his unique MS., and Ogilby's Plan of the Road from London to Canterbury in 1675.

Messrs Trübner & Co., of 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., are the Society publishers, Messrs Childs of Bungay its printers, and the Alliance Bank, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C., its bankers. The yearly subscription is two guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. More Members are wanted. All the Society's Publications can still be had. Those of the first year have just been reprinted.

Prof. Child, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Honorary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Honorary Secretary,

A. G. SNELGROVE, Esq.,
London Hospital, London, E.

Chaucer Society.

THE

Ellesmere MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART II.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCLXIX.

Reprinted 1881.

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Editor in Chief:—F. J. FURNIVALL, Esq., 3, St George's Square, Primrose Hill, N.W.
Hon. Sec.:—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, N.

THE CHAUCER SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts were and are wanted; and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder (Mr Furnivall) began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them (in parallel columns in Royal 4to) six of the best theretofore unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch as the parallel arrangement necessitated the alteration of the places of certain tales in some of the MSS, a print of each MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSS printed have been: the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere); the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.); the Camb. Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27; the Corpus, Oxford; the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield); and the Lansdowne 851 (Brit. Mus.). The Harleian 3374 will follow.

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The *Boece* from the best MS, and the *Troilus* Parallel-Text from the 3 best MSS, are now all in type.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Mr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with their MSS.

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FIRST SERIES.

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| III. | " | " | " | " | " | " | Hengwrt | " | 154 |
| IV. | " | " | " | " | " | " | Cambridge | " | Gg. 4. 27 |
| V. | " | " | " | " | " | " | Corpus | " | Oxford |
| VI. | " | " | " | " | " | " | Petworth | " | |
| VII. | " | " | " | " | " | " | Lansdowne | " | 851 |

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

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|-------|--|---------------|-------------|
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| X. | " | " | Cambridge " |
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with an
Appendix of
"Gamelyn"
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- XX. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Lansdowne MS.

each with woodcuts of fourteen drawings of Tellers of Tales in the Ellesmere MS.)

Early English Text Society.

Director: F. J. FURNIVALL, Esq., 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.
Treasurer: H. B. WHARTLEY, Esq., 5, Minford Gardens, West Kensington Park, W.
Hon. Sec.: W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Rd., Finsbury Park, London, N.
Bankers: THE UNION BANK OF LONDON, Head Office, Princes Street, E.C.
Publishers: N. TRÜBNER AND CO., 57 & 59, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.

The Early English Text Society was started by Mr Furnivall in 1864 for the purpose of bringing the mass of Old English Literature within the reach of the ordinary student, and of wiping away the reproach under which England had long rested, of having felt little interest in the monuments of her early life and language.

The E. E. T. Soc. desires to print in its Original Series the whole of our unprinted MS literature; and in its Extra Series to reprint in careful editions all that is most valuable of printed MSS and early printed books.

The Society has issued to its subscribers 110 Texts, most of them of great interest; so much so indeed that the publications of its first two years have been reprinted, and those for its third year, 1866, will follow.

The Subscription is £1 ls. a year [and £1 ls. (Large Paper, £2 12s. 6d.) additional for the EXTRA SERIES], due in advance on the 1st of JANUARY, and should be paid either to the Society's Account at the Head Office of the Union Bank of London, Princes Street, E.C., or by Money Order (made payable at the Chief Office, London) to the Hon. Secretary, Mr W. A. DALZIEL, 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

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Those for 1880 are:—

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 74. ENGLISH WORKS OF WYCLIF, hitherto unprinted, ed. F. D. MATTHEW, Esq.

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SIR BEVIS OF HAMTON, ed. Dr. E. KÖLBING.

LONELICH'S HOLY GRAIL, ed. F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. Part V.

Those for 1880 are:—

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XXXVI. CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES:—3. LYF OF CHARLES THE GRETE, Part I, ed. S. J. HERBERT, B.A.

The Ballad Society

was established by Mr Furnivall, on the completion of the print of the Percy Folio MS., to reprint the known collections of Ballads, like the Roxburghe, Bagford, Rawlinson, Douce, &c., and to print Ballads from MSS. and books illustrating Ballad-History. The Ballad Society books are printed in demy 8vo, like those of the Early English Text Society, and the Percy Folio (but on toned paper for the sake of the Wood-cuts), and also in super-royal 8vo, on Whatman's eighty-shilling ribbed paper. The subscription for the demy 8vos is *One Guinea* a year; that for the royal ribbed papers *Three Guineas*. The subscriptions date from January 1, 1868. The Society's books are not on sale separately to the public. Twenty have been issued.

More Members and Local Secretaries are wanted.

Subscriptions should be paid either to the account of *The Ballad Society* at the Alliance Bank, Bartholomew Lane, London, E.C., or (by Post Office Order, payable at the Chief Office, E.C.) to the Hon. Sec.—

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq.,
67, Victoria Rd, Finsbury Park, N.

No. 1. **Ballads and Poems from Manuscripts. Vol. I. Part 1**, on the Condition of England in the Reigns of Henry VIII. and Edw. VI. (including the State of the Clergy, Monks, and Friars) contains (besides a long Introduction) the following poems, &c.: Now a Dayes, ab. 1520 A.D.; Vox Populi Vox Dei, A.D. 1547-8; 'The Ruy' of a Ream'; The Image of Ypocresye, A.D. 1533; Against the Blaspheming English Lutherans and the Poisonous Dragon Luther; The Spoiling of the Abbeyes; The Overthrowe of the Abbeyes, a Tale of Robin Hood; De Monasteriis Dirutis. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1868.

No. 2. **Ballads from Manuscripts. Vol. I. Part 2**, contains Ballads on Wolsey, Anne Boleyn, Somerset, Lady Jane Grey, &c., with an Index and Glossary, by J. H. Backhouse, Esq., and Forewords to the whole Volume. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1872.

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No. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13. **The Roxburghe Ballads**, Part 1 (1869), Part 2 (1870), Part 3 (1871), Part 4 (1872), Part 5 (1873), Part 6 (1874), Part 7 (1875), Part 8 (1879), with short Notes by W. CHAPPELL, Esq., and copies of the original Woodcuts by Mr W. H. HOOPER. 1869.

No. 7. **Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books**, or, ROBERT LANEHAM'S Letter: Whearin part of the entertainment untoo the Queenz Majesty at Killingworth Castl, in Warwik Sheer in this Soomerz Progress .1575. is signified: from a freed officer attendant in the Court, unto hiz freend, a Citizen and Merchaut of London. Re-edited, with accounts of all Captain Cox's accessible Books and Ballads, and a comparison of them with those in the *Complaynt of Scotlande*, 1549 A.D., by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1871.

No. 11. **Love-Poems and Humorous ones**, from a volume in the British Museum, edited by F. J. FURNIVALL. 1874.

No. 14, 15, 16, 17. **The Bagford Ballads**, edited by the Rev. J. W. EDSWORTH, M.A. Part 1 (1876), Parts 2 and 3 (1877), Part 4 (1878); Supplement: The Amanda Group (1880).

In Preparation, all the Ballads having been copied.

The Roxburghe Ballads. With short Notes by the Rev. J. W. EDSWORTH, Parts 9 and 10, for 1881. [At Press.]

The Civil War and Protectorate Ballads. Edited by the Rev. J. W. EDSWORTH, M.A.

Chaucer Society.

THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART III.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

MDCCCLXXI.

Reprinted, 1887.

The Chaucer Society.

Editor in Chief:—Dr F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, Primrose Hill, N.W.
Hon. Sec.:—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

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Of Chaucer's *Minor Poems*,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the *Canterbury Tales*,—all the available MSS have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

The *Troilus* Parallel-Text from the 3 best MSS has been issued, and a 4th MS text of it with the englisht Boccaccio Comparison.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Dr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with their MSS.

Autotypes of most of the best Chaucer MSS have been published.

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Prof. Child, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Society's Honorary Secretary for America. Members' names and subscriptions may be sent to the Publishers, or to the Honorary Secretary.

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

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III.	"	"	"	"	Hengwrt	154
IV.	"	"	"	"	Cambridge	Gg. 4. 27
V.	"	"	"	"	Corpus	Oxford
VI.	"	"	"	"	Petworth	"
VII.	"	"	"	"	Lansdowne	851

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the **First Series**, is,

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IX.	"	"	"	"	Hengwrt	with an Appendix of "Gamelyn" from six MSS.
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XI.	"	"	"	"	Corpus	
XII.	"	"	"	"	Petworth	
XIII.	"	"	"	"	Lansdowne	

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21. *Life-Records of Chaucer*, Part III, *a*, The Household book of Isabella, wife of Prince Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GEOFFREY CHAUCER first occurs; edited from the unique MS in the Brit. Mus., by Edward A. Bond, LL.D., Chief Librarian. *b*, Chaucer as Forester of North Petherton, Somerset, 1390-1400, by Walford D. Selby, Esq. With an Appendix by Walter Rye, Esq., on I, Chaucer's Grandfather; II, Chaucer's connection with Lynn and Norfolk.

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Chaucer Society.

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PART IV.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
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MDCCCLXXII.

Reprinted, 1887.

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VII. " " " " " " "	Lansdowne " 851	" "

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No. 2. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Vol. I, Part 2, contains Ballads on Wolsey, Anne Boleyn, Somerset, Lady Jane Grey, &c., with an Index and Glossary, by J. H. Backhouse, Esq., and Forewords to the whole Volume. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1872.

Nos. 3, 10. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Volume II, Part 1: **The Poore Mans Pittance**, by RICHARD WILLIAMS, containyng three severall subjectis:—(1.) The firste, the fall and complaynte of Anthonie Babington, whoe, with others, weare executed for highe treason in the feildes nere lyncolns Inne, in the yeaere of our lorde—1586. (2.) The seconde containes the life and Deathe of Roberte, lorde Devereux, Earle of Essex: whoe was beheaded in the towre of london on ash-wensdaye mornyng, *Ann*—1601. (3.) The laste, Intituled "acclamatio patrie," containyng the horrib[le] treason that weare pretended agaynste your Maestie, to be donne on the parliament howse The seconde [third] yeaere of your Maestie Raygne [1605]. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1868. Vol. II, Part 2, containing Ballads on Queen Elizabeth, Essex, Campion, Drake, Raleigh, Fro-bisher, Bacon, etc. Edited by W. R. MORFILL, M.A., Oxford, 1873.

Nos. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13. **The Roxburghe Ballads.** Part 1 (1869), Part 2 (1870), Part 3 (1871), Part 4 (1872), Part 5 (1873), Part 6 (1874), Part 7 (1875), Part 8 (1879), with short Notes by W. CHAPPELL, Esq., and copies of the original Woodcuts by Mr W. H. HOOPER. 1869.

No. 7. **Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books**, or, ROBERT LANEHAM's Letter: Whearin part of the entertainment unto the Queenz Majesty at Killingworth Castl, in Warwik Sheer in this Soomerz Progress .1575. is signified; from a frend officer attendant in the Court, unto his frend, a Citizen and Merchaunt of London. Re-edited, with accounts of all Captain Cox's accessible Books and Ballads, and a comparison of them with those in the *Complaynt of Scotlande*, 1549 A.D., by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. 1871.

No. 11. **Love-Poems and Humorous ones**, from a volume in the British Museum, edited by F. J. FURNIVALL. 1874.

Nos. 14 to 17. **The Bagford Ballads**, edited by the Rev. J. W. ENSWORTH, M.A. Part 1 (1876), Parts 2 and 3 (1877), Part 4 (1878); Suppl.: *Amanda Group* (1880).

Nos. 21 to 28. **The Roxburghe Ballads**, Part 10 (1881), Part 11 (1882), Part 12 (1883), Part 13 (1884), Parts 14 and 15 (1885), Part 16 (1886), Part 17 (1887). Edited, with Introductions, Notes, and copies of all original Woodcuts drawn and engraved, by the Rev. J. W. ENSWORTH, M.A., F.S.A. (*To be continued*.)

Chaucer Society.

THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART V.

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY
BY KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO.,
PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING-CROSS ROAD.

1874.

[Reprinted, 1896.]

The Chaucer Society.

Editor in Chief:—Dr. F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, Primrose Hill, N. W.

Hon. Sec.:—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts were and are wanted; and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder (Dr Furnivall) began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them (in parallel columns in Royal 4to) six of the best theretofore unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch as the parallel arrangement necessitated the alteration of the places of certain tales in some of the MSS, a print of each MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSS printed have been: the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere); the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.); the Camb. Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27; the Corpus, Oxford; the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield); and the Lansdowne 851 (Brit. Mus.). The Harleian 7334 has followed; and *Specimens of all accessible MSS of the Tales* are now in course of issue, edited by the late Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D., and Dr. John Koch.

Of Chaucer's *Minor Poems*,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the *Canterbury Tales*,—all the available MSS have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

Of *Troilus*, Parallel-Texts from the 6 best MSS have been issued (the Campsall MS also separately), and a 7th MS text of it with the english Boccaccio Comparison. *Autotypes* of most of the best Chaucer MSS have been published.

Dr. E. Flügel is editing the Society's *Chaucer Concordance*, to be completed in 1900 A.D., the Quincentenary of the Poet's death, when the Chaucer Society will wind up.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works; and the Second, such originals of and essays on these as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

The yearly subscription, which constitutes Membership, is 2 guineas, due on every 1st January, beginning with Jan. 1, 1868. *More Members are wanted. All the Society's Publications can still be had.*

Prof. Child, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., is the Society's Hon. Sec. for America. Members' names and subscriptions should be sent to the home Hon. Sec.,

W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

FIRST SERIES.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the **First Series**, is,

- I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the *Canterbury Tales*, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 38 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Moveable Prologues" of the *Canterbury Tales*,—The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue,—when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)
- II—VII. II. The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS, Part I; III. Hengwrt MS, 154, Pt I; IV. Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27, Pt I; V. Corpus MS, Oxford, Pt I; VI. Petworth MS, Pt I; VII. Lansdowne MS, 851, Pt I. (separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the **First Series**, is,

- VIII—XIII. VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales: Ellesmere MS, Part II; IX. Hengwrt MS, Pt II; X. Cambridge MS, Pt II; XI. Corpus MS, Pt II; XII. Petworth MS, Pt II; XIII. Lansdowne MS, Pt II, with an Appendix of "Gamelyn" from six MSS.

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the **First Series**, is,

- XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious Tale of Gamelyn, in 6 parallel Texts. (Six-Text, Part II.)

The issue for 1871, in the **First Series**, is,

- XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS. (Six-Text, Part III.)
- XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS. Part III.
- XVII. " " " " " " " " Cambridge MS. Part III.
- XVIII. " " " " " " " " Corpus MS. Part III.
- XIX. The Shipman's, Prioress's, and Man of Law's Tales, from the Petworth MS. Part III.

and an enlarged Autotype of Hoccleve's Portrait of Chaucer, edited by F. J. Furnivall.

15. *Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, Part III. 13. The Story of Constance, for the *Man of Law's Tale*. 14. The Boy killed by a Jew for singing 'Gaude Maria,' an Analogue of the *Prioress's Tale*. 15. The Paris Beggar-boy murdered by a Jew for singing 'Alma redemptoris mater!' an Analogue of the *Prioress's Tale*; with a Poem by Lydgate. Edited by F. J. Furnivall.

16. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part III. 7. Chaucer's Prioress, her Nun Chaplain and 3 Priests, illustrated from the Paper Survey of St Mary's Abbey, Winchester, by F. J. Furnivall. 8. Alliteration in Chaucer, by Dr. Paul Lindner. 9. Chaucer a Wicliffite; a critical Examination of the *Parson's Tale*, by Herr Hugo Simon. 10. The sources of the Wife of Bath's Prologue: Chaucer not a borrower from John of Salisbury, by the Rev. W. W. Woolcombe.

17. *Supplementary Canterbury Tales*: 1. The Tale of *Beryn*, with a Prologue of the merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury, re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's unique MS, by Fredk. J. Furnivall. Part I, the Text, with Wm. Smith's Map of Canterbury in 1588, now first engraved from his unique MS., and Ogilby's Plan of the Road from London to Canterbury in 1675.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1878 (there was none in 1877) is, 18. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part IV. 11. On *here* and *there* in Chaucer (his Pronunciation of the two *e's*), by Dr. R. F. Weymouth; 12. On *a*. An Original Version of the *Knight's Tale*; *β*. the Date (1381) and Personages of the *Parlament of Foules*; *γ*. on *Anelida and Arcyte*, on Lollins, on Chaucer, and Boccaccio, &c., by Dr. John Koch, with a fragment of a later *Palamon and Ercyte* from the Dublin MS D. 4. 18.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1884 (none in 1879, '80, '81, '82, '83, '85) is, 19. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part V: 13. Chaucer's *Pardoner*: his character illustrated by documents of his time, by Dr J. J. Jusserand. 14. Why the *Romaunt of the Rose* is not Chaucer's, by Prof. Skeat, M.A. 15. Chaucer's *Schipman*, and his Barge 'The Maudelayne,' by P. Q. Karkeek, Esq. 16. Chaucer's *Parson's Tale* compared with Frère Lorens's *Somme de Vices et de Vertus*, by Wilhelm Eilers, Ph.D., 1882, englisht 1884. 17. On Chaucer's Reputed Works, by T. L. Kingston-Oliphant, M.A.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1886 is,

20. *Originals and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales*. Part IV. Eastern Analogs I, by W. A. Clouston.

21. *Life-Records of Chaucer*, Part III, *a*. The Household book of Isabella, wife of Prince Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GEOFFREY CHAUCER first occurs; edited from the unique MS in the Brit. Mus., by Edward A. Bond, LL.D., Chief Librarian. *b*. Chaucer as Forester of North Petherton, Somerset, 1390-1400, by Walford D. Selby, Esq. With an Appendix by Walter Rye, Esq., on I. Chaucer's Grandfather; II. Chaucer's connection with Lynn and Norfolk.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1887 is,

22. *Originals and Analogs of the Canterbury Tales*, Part V (completing the volume). Eastern Analogs, II, by W. A. Clouston.

23. John Lane's *Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale*, edited by F. J. Furnivall from the 2 MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, A.D. 1616, 1630. Part I.

24. *Supplementary Canterbury Tales*: 2. The Tale of *Beryn*, Part II. Forewords by F. J. Furnivall, Notes by F. Vipan, M.A. &c., and Glossary by W. G. Stone; with an Essay on Analogs of the Tale, by W. A. Clouston.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1888 is,

25. *Early English Pronunciation*, with especial reference to Shakespeare and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part V, and last.

[~~26~~] This was inadvertently marked No. 27 for 1889, on Cover and Title-page.]

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1889 is,

26. John Lane's *Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale*. Part II, with an Essay on the Magical Elements in the *Squire's Tale*, and Analogues, by W. A. Clouston.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1890 is,

27. *The Chronology of Chaucer's Writings*, by John Koch, Ph.D., Berlin.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1891 is,

28. *Observations on the Language of Chaucer's Troilus* (a Study of its MSS, their words and forms), by Prof. George Lyman Kittredge, M.A.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for 1892 is,

29. *Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works*, Part VI, by Prof. Cowell, LL.D., Alois Brandl, Ph.D., Rev. Prof. Skeat, Litt.D., and W. M. Rossetti.

Of the **Second Series**, the issues for 1893 to 1897 will probably be, *Lydgate's Siege of Thebes*, edited from the MSS by Dr Axel Erdmann. [Text set. *Life-Records of Chaucer*, Part IV, Enrolments and Documents from the Public Record Office, the City of London Town-Clerk's Office, &c., ed. R. E. G. Kirk, Esq.

Among the Texts and Chaucer Essays, &c., preparing for the Society are:—

Specimen-Extracts from all the unprinted MSS of Chaucer's Troilus, with an Introduction on the MSS, Metre and Grammar of the Poem, by Prof. McCormick, M.A., of St. Andrew's.

The Troilus MS Harl. 2392—the only one with Latin sidenotes and glosses—edited by Prof. McCormick, M.A.

The Praise of Chaucer from his day to ours, compiled by Miss J. B. Partridge.

Chaucer's Road to Canterbury, with Ogilby's Plan of it, 1675, and William Smith's Plan of the City of Canterbury in 1588; by Henry Littlehales, Esq.

'A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* of Boccaccio,' by HENRY WARD, M.A., late of the British Museum. [At Press.]

Melibe et Prudence, the French Original of Chaucer's 'Tale of Melibe,' edited from the MSS by Dr Mary Noyes Colvin.

Prof. E. Flügel, Ph.D., is editing *The Chaucer Concordance* for the Society.

Sample Tale from all the other MSS of the Canterbury Tales. As many Chaucer Students have often wanted to know what kind of text was contained in the MSS of the Canterbury Tales other than the Seven printed by the Chaucer Society—the Ellesmere, Hengwrt. Cambridge Gg, Corpus (Oxford), Petworth, Lansdowne, and Harleian 7334—the Director resolved to get printed a sample Tale from all the accessible MSS of the Tales.¹ He wished to have *The Wife of Bath's Prolog and Tale*, because they show the most variations, but as Prof. Zupitza, who most kindly volunteered to classify the MSS and edit their sample Tales, objected to the subject of the *Wife's Prolog*, the Director proposed *The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale* (which apparently showed the next number of changes of reading), and Prof. Zupitza accepted this Prolog and Tale. He accordingly classified all the MSS, and edited the *Pardoner's Prolog and Tale* from 23 of them, in 3 Parts, before his sudden and lamented death. The remaining 17 copies of the Tale are all in type, and will be edited by Dr. John Koch for the Society's First Series in 1895.

¹ Lord Ashburnham and Lady Cardigan will not at present allow their MSS to be seen.

Early English Text Society.

Director: Dr F. J. FURNIVALL, 3, St George's Square, London, N.W.

Hon. Sec.: W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

Founded by Dr Furnivall in 1864 to print in its Original Series all our unprinted MS literature; and in its Extra Series to reprint in careful editions all that is most valuable of printed MSS and early printed books. The Subscription, which constitutes Membership, is £1 ls. a year [and £1 ls. additional for the EXTRA SERIES], due in advance on the 1st of JANUARY, and should be paid to the Hon. Sec.

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Shakspere Quarto Facsimiles, issued under Dr Furnivall's superintendence, by Mr W. Griggs and Mr Charles Praetorius, and published by Mr B. Quaritch, 16, Piccadilly, W. The set of 43, at 6s. each; singly, 10s. 6d.

The Ballad Society.

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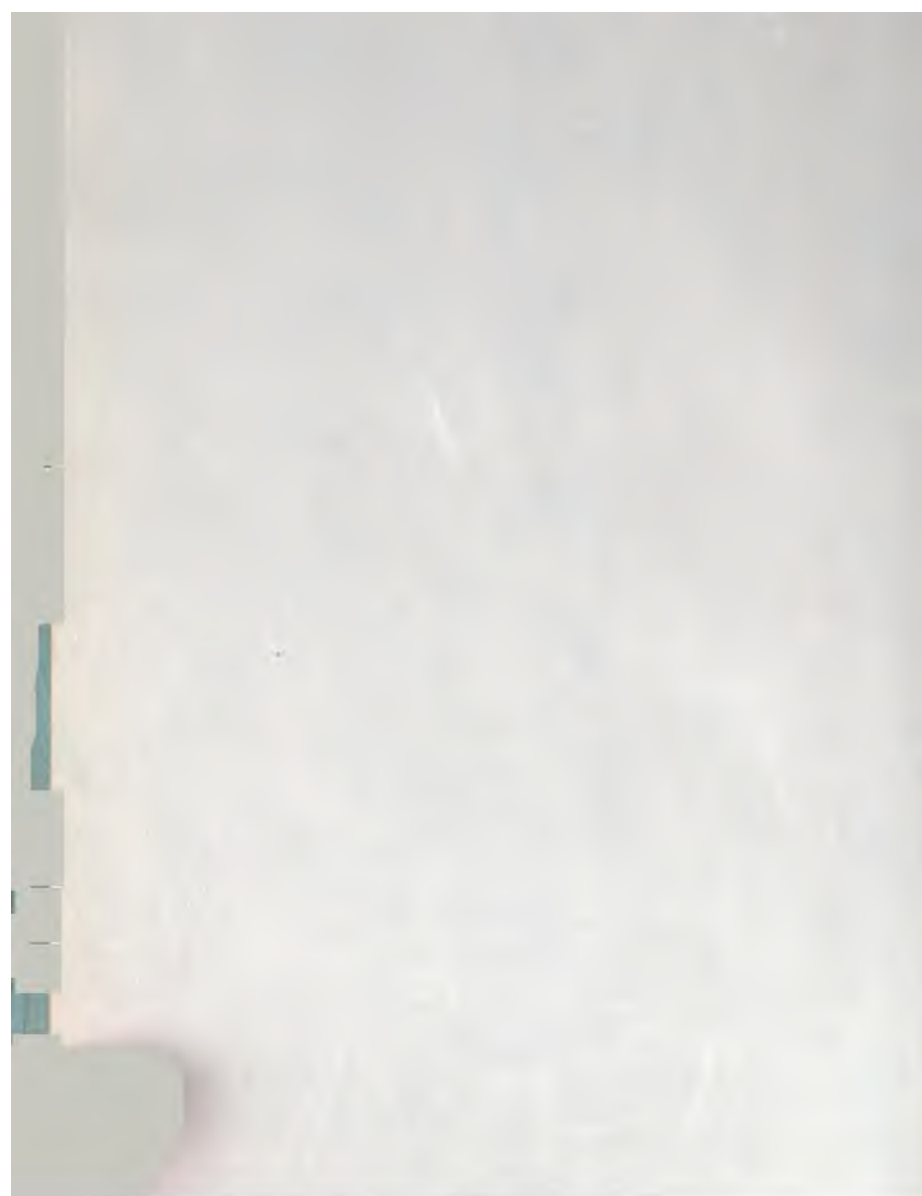
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